



Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond
August 14 – 21, 2015

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Aboriginal Arts & Culture

Election soundtrack: Indigenous playlist packs political punch

From Young Medicine to Tanya Tagaq, songs that could inspire you to rock the vote

By Janet Rogers, [for CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 13, 2015 8:01 PM ET Last Updated: Aug 14, 2015 5:57 PM ET



Young Medicine featuring Trent Agecutay released this single to encourage Indigenous Peoples to vote in the upcoming federal election. (Brad Crowfoot)

With a federal election looming and political mud being flung between parties, native communities across Canada are faced with some big questions: Do we follow our forebears and not interfere with the colonizer's politics? If we vote, can we really make a difference? And which party deserves our vote?

Here is a list of songs which pack a political influential punch coming from an unequivocal native perspective — an indigenous soundtrack for the election season.

1. *For What its Worth* by Young Medicine featuring Trent Agecutay

Curt Young and Jamie Medicine Crane couple up to bring audiences socially conscience songs firmly rooted in their cultural teachings.

With this Buffalo Springfield cover track, Young Medicine reaches back to a 1970s popular radio song originally composed by Steven Stills to echo sentiments recently promoted by the Assembly of First Nations.

The sentiments of AFN? Native people have the power to make a difference in this election. Native people need to put their disdain for a mainstream political system — which often times sees them as inconvenient barriers to further resource extraction — aside. In short, native people need to get out and vote.

The results of this musical call to the polls has yet to be seen. But rest assured, we have now come full circle from not being considered citizens, to gaining the right to vote in 1960, to decisively rejecting the voting system, and now to entertaining an indigenous push to the polls.

Thank you Young Medicine for marking this political event in our collective histories.

2. Working for the Government by A Tribe Called Red featuring Buffy Sainte-Marie

This is the greatest musical definition of a two-for-one. A Tribe Called Red has provided brand new territories for native and non-native people to dance on together.

Here, they've done what any respectful indigenous gentlemen raised in the culture knows to do — give honour to those who have paved the way for their success. Hence, the remix of indigenous groundbreaker Buffy Sainte Marie's *Working for the Government*.

ATCR knows the art of timing. This throwback/remix dropped on July 1st, a.k.a. Canada Day, and preceded the AFN's collective announcement urging all nations to get out and vote this fall. Makes one wonder, who exactly IS working for the government.

3. Fracking by Tanya Tagaq

The most effective and efficient way to communicate any political cause is to make people feel. Emotional campaigns tend to win a percentage of the votes.

On the track *Fracking*, [from her Polaris and Juno Award winning album *Animism*](#), Tanya Tagaq emphatically places her whole being on the front lines of the fracking issue and invites the listener to hear what it's like for the land to be raped, violated, abused and forcefully bled.



'On the track Fracking, from her Polaris and Juno Award winning album Animism, Tanya Tagaq emphatically places her whole being on the front lines of the fracking issue,' says Janet Rogers. (The Canadian Press)

There is no doubt this track has the potential to effect Alberta pipeline lifers and touch some seemingly soul-less government ministers with investment hard-ons. If you're not feeling this sound-song, you're dead inside.

Tanya Tagaq for prime minister!

4. The Cheque is in the Mail by 7th Fire

This popular 80s punk reggae group, made up of brothers Allan and David DeLeary, was the first of their generation of music makers who let the rest of the nation know that native communities were paying attention to mainstream politics and clearly did not like what they were seeing.

When their hit song *The Cheque is in the Mail* aired on the newly-broadcast Much Music, it gave every indigenous person across the nation a reason to sit up a little straighter, feel a little prouder and raise a fist in unison with these messy-haired-heads-on-straight Ojibway boys.

There were no other bands doing what they were doing or saying what they were saying: "Promises of food and there was none, promises of land and there was none, so we sent for more beer and now it's gone; now you tell me that the cheque is in the mail."

5. B.I.A. by Floyd Redcrow Westerman

Digging in the files for some of the early Indian music on records I came up with a 2:24 track by someone better know as an actor and official spokesperson for Lakota herbal medicine products.

But before the cameras found him, the late Floyd was very much influenced by political philosopher and academic activist Vine Deloria.

B.I.A. (Bureau of Indian Affairs) is the original round dance song complete with protest lyrics and powwow chants.

So the flow chart may look like this: academic political science author influences the folk singer, the folk singer influences the communities and the communities express their political values through lifestyle choices, commercial purchases and quite possibly through voting in federal elections.

Floyd knew we could take control of our own governing destinies and he sang about it loud and proud in the 60s and 70s. Listen up.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/election-soundtrack-indigenous-playlist-packs-political-punch-1.3187278>

Throat-singing kick-off for downtown celebration

By: Jonathan Migneault - Sudbury Northern Life

| Aug 14, 2015 - 12:05 PM |



Inuit throat singer Tanya Tagaq wowed a large crowd at the Grand Theatre as the first big headliner at Up Fest. Photo by Jim Gray.

Inuit throat singer impresses opening night crowd

Acclaimed Inuit throat singer Tanya Tagaq kicked off [Up Fest](#) on Friday night as the festival's first big headliner.

The JUNO Award-winning artist performed with Sudbury's Silver Birch String Quartet, but it was her voice that proved to be the most powerful instrument on stage.

Tagaq and the quartet had only an hour to practice together, before they performed an improvised set that doubled as a real-time soundtrack to the silent documentary, *Nanook of the North*.

The film became a major hit when it was released in 1922, and depicted the life of the “fearless, lovable, happy-go-lucky Eskimo.”

While some of the film's depictions of the Inuit have been deemed politically incorrect by today's modern sensibilities, Tagaq said her musical interpretation of the documentary would allow her to “lift a middle finger to colonialism.”

Like Saturday's Up Fest headliners A Tribe Called Red, Tagak, who was born Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, has taken the traditions of her ancestors and transported them into a contemporary context.

Inuit women invented throat singing as a game they would play when the men were off on hunting trips.

They would sing in duets and compete to see who could outlast the other.

Tagaq showed off her vocal range Thursday night by nailing her high notes, and switching to the low guttural growl that has become synonymous with Inuit throat singing.

During the film's more intense scenes – such an exhilarating walrus hunt – the music's tempo reached an equal intensity with a terrifying primal quality.

But moments later, when the Inuit children played with husky puppies in the Arctic landscape, Tagaq and the quartet switched to a lighter touch, and recreated the sound of children's laughter with their instruments.

When the movie ended, the audience had time to catch its breath and roared with applause for Tagaq and the Silver Birch String Quartet.

Up Fest continues Friday and Saturday with a number of musical performances around Sudbury's downtown.

[Don't forget to check out the video](#) NorthernLife.ca produced from last night's launch (you've got to see Mayor Brian Bigger show off his turntable skills).

For more information visit upfest.ca.

Direct Link: <http://www.northernlife.ca/news/lifestyle/2015/08/14-upfest-opening-night-sudbury.aspx>

Drums sound in downtown for Urban-Nish

By [Sarah Moore](#)

Friday, August 14, 2015 8:49:24 EDT PM



People in downtown Timmins were treated to live performances by members of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation community on Friday afternoon at the fourth-annual Urban-Nish celebration. The White Stone Cree Singers, pictured, performed an original drum song at the event to help celebrate aboriginal culture.

TIMMINS - The Timmins Native Friendship Centre brought a taste of aboriginal culture to the Downtown Timmins Urban Park on Friday afternoon with the celebration of its fourth-annual Urban-Nish.

The Friendship Centre partnered with the Downtown Timmins BIA as well as members of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, who live in Timmins and the surrounding region, to put on the event.

“It’s really important to bridge the gap between mainstream and aboriginal people, which we can do by bringing this aboriginal element to the Urban Park,” said Heather Murray, the healing and wellness coordinator of the Timmins Native Friendship Centre. “There’s so many negative stigmas on aboriginal people so this is a way to let people see us in a different light and say, ‘Hey, we’re not that stereotypical aboriginal person that you might hear about.’”

She explained that showcasing traditional songs, dances and food is a great way to educate the public about the distinct cultural and spiritual elements that are celebrated in the region’s aboriginal community.

Elizabeth Etherington kicked off the event on Friday afternoon by performing an original song offering a blessing and thanks to the Creator.

The White Stone Cree Singers were next and performed a rousing drum medley for the crowd in front of the teepee that had been erected on Third Avenue specifically for the event.

“I think the teepee is really cool,” Samantha Grulet, project coordinator for the Urban Park, said. “It was really interesting to see it go up because it’s an art to assemble — it really is.”

The teepee, which was constructed out of canvas and 13 large wooden poles, stood approximately three metres tall and was transported to the Urban Park from its original home at the Friendship Centre earlier that day. Murray explained that as well as being the original warm-weather home for many aboriginal people, the teepee is also representative of the 13 Moon calendar which was used to mark time in the past.

“A group of women were taking pictures with it earlier and a lot of people have never seen a teepee before,” she said. “So it’s a big thing to see a teepee on Third Avenue because how many times would you really see something like that?”

Later in the afternoon, residents were treated to a traditional dance number and other live performances. They could also peruse the arts and crafts of local aboriginal vendors or try out an Indian Taco or some fresh bannock bread. The food was cooked fresh to order by Michael Yorke, the chef at Vicky D’Amours Bakery.

“I really wanted to open up people’s eyes here in Timmins about native cuisine because there’s not a lot of it available despite having such a large native population,” Yorke said. “I’m native myself so it’s something I enjoyed, preparing the menu, and jumped on board when they said they wanted to do an aboriginal focus today.”

While the rain poured down midway through the afternoon, there was still enough sunshine and warm weather throughout the day to allow guests to enjoy the festivities.

“It was a great turnout, a great day, and it’s great seeing everyone come together as a community here at the Urban-Nish,” Grulet said.

Direct Link: <http://www.timminspress.com/2015/08/14/drums-sound-in-downtown-for-urban-nish>

Bringing the northern life to life



Photo courtesy by Denise Lebleu

Scary Bear's Gloria Guns and Christine Aye: A northern perspective influences their new synth-pop CD called "Scary Bear Soundtrack".

Guelph Mercury

By [Coral Andrews](#), Aug 15, 2015

Synth-pop act Scary Bear Soundtrack chronicles Arctic winters, particularly daily life in "predominantly Inuit" Nunavut and its Cambridge Bay community.

From the wonder of the northern lights on sensual "synth heavy" dream-track "My First Northern Lights" to the barren beauty of hiking route "Ovayok Road" the music is a reflection of northern life.

Gloria Guns (Gloria Song) says Scary Bear Soundtrack comes from an inside joke.

"For fun I used to make little amateur horror films like the murderous teddy bear named Scary Bear," says Guns. "He was a teddy that my friends had and he was really deformed looking. I created horror film shorts with him in it. So I decided the band should be called Scary Bear Soundtrack," adds the synth player/vocalist with a giggle.

But Scary Bear's lyrical content is no joke. Guns and her creative cohort Christine Aye use their songs to fund animal rescue, food banks, and low income family projects while raising the profile of life in Nunavut; be it the cold on fun tune "Blanket Burrito," typical living conditions like "running out of water for a bath" in calypso-style "Water Truck," or rape culture and violence against women on "Fault Lines." This breakthrough single containing bold lyrics like "every girl walks a fault line" and "I will learn to walk with broken legs" received critical kudos making the band one of the four top CBC Radio Searchlight artists out of 3,000 bands across the country.

Guns says the music video for "Fault Lines" features submitted "selfies" from people all over the world holding up "End Violence Against Women" signs.

Like band Stars, who also write dire lyrics oft set to candy-coloured melodies ("No One is Lost"), Scary Bear possesses sparkling synth-pop insights into the far northerner's rapidly changing social and political landscape.

And here's no small technical musical feat . . . The "Nunavut-based" "Ovayok Road" was entirely recorded in Cambridge Bay, sans mixing or mastering!

"Bandwidth is really awful there," remarks Guns. "It is very slow and we only get 20 gigs (gigabytes) a month. If you are a musician, sending music is really expensive if you go over bandwidth. So those are some of the interesting challenges we get in Nunavut trying to deal with music there. Christine and I recorded the EP ourselves and then emailed all of the tracks out to a mixing engineer that lives in North Bay. We had the tracks mastered by a guy in Vancouver so it was kind of a cross-Canada project," says Guns, who, until recently, lived in Cambridge Bay, and then relocated to Ottawa.

Guns says her creative partner Aye (back up vocals, keys, and occasional glockenspiel) originates from "music isolated" Myanmar (Burma) "getting her hands on whatever music she could." She played in a metal band before leaving for university. Guns, of Korean descent, who began (reluctant) piano lessons at five, playing guitar and then rediscovering keys, spent high school years listening to savvy alt-indie bands Radiohead and Broken Social Scene. That helped shape Scary Bear's provocative lyrics meshed with its unique synth 'n' drums sound.

For their show in Waterloo on Saturday at Seven Shores Urban Market and Café, Guns and Aye are joined by (brother-in-law) ex HIGHS drummer Kevin Ledlow, and bassist/(choral) vocalist Dannik Leduc.

The Seven Shores gig came about through meeting special guest Elsa Jayne.

"I met her through Searchlight and I used that as an opportunity to discover new bands that I like. I really enjoyed Elsa's sound."

Scary Bear Soundtrack and Elsa Jayne

Seven Shores Urban Market and Café

10 Regina St. N., Unit 4, Waterloo

Saturday, Aug. 15

6 p.m.

All ages

\$6-\$10

<https://scarybearsoundtrack.bandcamp.com/>

Direct Link: <http://www.guelphmercury.com/whatson-story/5798793-bringing-the-northern-life-to-life/>

Copper Inuit kayak that spent 50 years in Edmonton basement heads home

5-metre kayak made of caribou skin and, likely, driftwood is in near-perfect condition

By Sara Minogue, [CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 17, 2015 5:00 AM CT Last Updated: Aug 17, 2015 5:00 AM CT



This Copper Inuit kayak was stored in the basement of the Baydala home in Edmonton since the 1960s. (Lola Baydala)

A historian, a carpenter and a conservation expert will descend on an Edmonton home today in an effort to free a traditional Copper Inuit kayak that's been stored in the basement for almost 50 years.

It's the resolution of a mystery that began when Walter and Stella Baydala first bought the home in 1967.

"Apparently this family had been living with the kayak in their basement," says Brendan Griebel of the Kitikmeot Heritage Society in Cambridge Bay. "It's kind of the family room down there, and when they moved into the house... there was this kayak in the middle of the room. And no obvious way that it got in there or out of there."

The five-metre kayak is made of caribou skin and, likely, driftwood. After five decades in a humidified basement, Griebel says it's in near-perfect condition.

Griebel expects to have to remove part of a basement wall, and possibly some window frames, to get it out today. Then he'll build a shipping crate to carry it back to Kugluktuk, Nunavut, where he believes it was first built in the 1950s.

Where did it come from?

Griebel applied some skepticism when he first got the call from the family last year — "We get a fair number of emails from people who want to give stuff back to the North," he said — but the photos were compelling.



Elders in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, measure a sealskin cover onto a kayak frame during a 2009 Kitikmeot Heritage Society project to revive and document the art of Copper Inuit style kayak making. (Brendan Griebel)

"I was fairly certain that it was a local style of kayak," says Griebel, whose group had done some work with kayaks in recent years.

To get closer to its origin, Griebel wanted to track down the man who put the kayak in the house. All he had was the name of the former owner, Bryce Weir.

Searching for Arctic connections with that name, Griebel says he was drawing blanks, until his father walked into the room one day and asked what he was doing. "'Oh Bryce,' he says. 'I know him really well. He was one of my mentors at the hospital when I was doing my residency.'"

Weir, an Edmonton neurosurgeon, first saw the kayak hanging over a display of Inuit carvings at the old Hudson Bay Company store on Jasper Avenue. On a whim, he convinced the store manager to sell it to him, then later took out part of his basement wall to get the kayak inside.

When Griebel contacted him, Weir still had two copper-pointed lances, which were originally with the boat, and which allowed Griebel to verify the boat's origin.

Griebel has since spoken with elders in Kugluktuk who believe they could name the individual builder, though he has since died, if they were to see the boat in the flesh.



A kayak exhibit constructed by the Kitikmeot Heritage Society at Cambridge Bay's May Hakongak Cultural Centre. A similar exhibit will be built to house the historic kayak in Kugluktuk's Ulu Centre. (Brendan Griebel)

'Does seem kinda odd'

By pure coincidence, the community of Kugluktuk, formerly Coppermine, [opened its first heritage and visitors' centre last year](#).

"They've got this just perfect span through the centre of the museum where it will slot right in," Griebel says, describing this as "hugely rare" in Nunavut. The territory is so short of museum space that it still [stores about 140,000 artifacts in Yellowknife](#), at a cost of about \$1 million a year.

Stella Baydala, for one, is very pleased the kayak is returning home.

"You know, you think about it now and it does seem odd that we would have a kayak sitting in the basement," says Baydala.

But Baydala admits they were uncurious about the kayak. The northern theme was simply something that came from the previous homeowner. "It kinda looked good because it's the same colour as the rumpus room walls."

She credits her daughter Lola with working to find a home for it, after growing up with the artifact.

And, she says, this isn't quite goodbye.

"As soon as it's placed nicely in a nice museum, we'll come and see it."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/copper-inuit-kayak-that-spent-50-years-in-edmonton-basement-heads-home-1.3192775>

Professionals learn Cree at Wanuskewin to connect with community

Participants learn about Cree world view and culture while studying language.

[CBC News](#)

Posted: Aug 20, 2015 1:26 PM CT

Last Updated: Aug 20, 2015 4:37 PM CT



Belinda Daniels learned Cree as second language, and now teaches it to others. Josh Lynn/CBC

For over a decade, Belinda Daniels has been helping adults learn Cree at her Nehiyaw Language Camp.

"They want to know what it means to be Cree, what is the world view, what is the connection with nature, with spirituality," said Daniels, who also teaches Cree at the University of Saskatchewan.



This is the third year Randy Gudmundson has attended the camp. (Josh Lynn/CBC)

Most people who attend the camp are professionals who want to be able to communicate with people in Cree, she said.

Johanna Kaiser is one of the participants taking part in this year's edition of the camp, she lives and works in La Ronge.

"I've been there for a couple years now, there's lots of people there I can't speak to when I'm working or otherwise," she said. "So I think part of my responsibility while I'm living there is to learn Cree."



Johanna Kaiser wants to better communicate with Cree speakers she meets living and working in La Ronge. (Josh Lynn/CBC)

Another person working to pick up Cree at the camp is Randy Gudmundson, it's his third time attending. Gudmundson works at Indigenous Gaming Regulators as a licensing officer.

"I am working with a few people in the office that speak fluent Cree, so I'm getting a chance to practice with them on a daily basis," he said.

After 11 years, Daniels said she still gets excited about running the camp.

"If I could do this everyday I would," Daniels said. "I love working with people interested in coming into a Cree space, and learning about Cree world view, Cree philosophy, wanting to create partnerships and friendships."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/m/touch/canada/saskatoon/story/1.3198088>

The edible gardens of Grand-Métis are a chef's paradise

[Lesley Chesterman, Special to Montreal Gazette](#)

[More from Lesley Chesterman, Special to Montreal Gazette](#)



Chef Pierre-Olivier Ferry assembles his Métis Bloom Spoon at the Reford Gardens in Grand-Métis. Lesley Chesterman

I'm standing next to a large trellis at the Reford Gardens beside chef Pierre-Olivier Ferry, who is crouched over a frail vine looking for something he tells me is quite special. Having visited this famous garden (known in French as the Jardins de Métis) in Grand-Métis on the south shore of the St. Lawrence before, I was used to admiring the magnificent perennial borders, the alpine garden, the art installations and the rare blue poppies, yet this was the first time I was lucky enough to see how many of these magnificent plants are edible.

Recently transferred from the greenhouse to this kitchen garden, the vine Ferry is scanning is Mexican in origin and has been struggling in the chilly early summer weather here in the Gaspé ever since. Ferry eventually plucks off what appears to be doll-sized watermelon. Known as a cucamelon or "mouse melon," this fruit may have the markings of a watermelon, but when you crunch down, the taste is reminiscent of cucumber and lime. What fun!



Chef Pierre-Olivier Ferry's Métis Bloom Spoon at the Reford Gardens restaurant in Grand-Métis. Lesley Chesterman

I can't imagine any chef in Quebec — or perhaps on the planet — has a greater arsenal of nature's best ingredients to choose from than Pierre-Olivier Ferry. While guiding me through acres of gardens, he shows me dozens more of the 180-odd edible plants at his disposal, which include a wide array of sea plants from the shores of the St. Lawrence River along the property. Ferry also points out the garden's 10 beehives from which they draw honey, as well as a newly acquired flock of sheep raised on site, destined for the dining room.

Gathering petals and leaves in a basket as he goes, Ferry hands me the purplish blue flower from a tufted vetch that grows rampant on the property. Considered a weed, the plant is from the pea family and when I bite down, it indeed tastes like peas.

As the walk continues, we nibble on marigold flowers and stems, and suck the sweet syrup from the tips of sage flowers, both purple and the rare black. There are more than 100 varieties of gentiana on site, and the ones we taste are the trumpet-shaped deep blue flowers. We rub fuzzy scented geranium leaves between our fingers, and revel in the various odours: rose, lemon, mint and spice. Ferry says they are often infused to make syrups for cocktails, as is the case with herbs like rosemary and verbena as well. We approach a bed of magnificent yellow day lilies, and Ferry picks off a petal and tells me to taste. It's peppery and dissolves down my throat in an instant. I had tasted pickled day lily buds in the past, but day lily petals were a first for me.

"We don't grow carrots, potatoes and onions here," Ferry says. "We buy those. We prefer to concentrate on what you can't find at the market."



A selection of plants chef Pierre-Olivier Ferry uses to garnish his dishes, including begonia petals, allium leaves, lemon basil, mustard sprouts, sea rocket and oxalis. Lesley Chesterman

At the garden's restaurant located on the main floor of the epicentre of the garden, the Estevan Lodge, he puts all these leaves, flowers, stems and petals to good use. A recent lunch here began with a martini flavoured with a pickled day lily and a cocktail made with curaçao and rosemary. An appetizer of asparagus is enhanced with egg yolk confit, day lilies and chive flowers, and an entree featuring turbot is served with potatoes perfumed with sea algae, shoreline plants, pickled green onions, geranium and daisy tartar sauce. A dish of Arctic char with lobster consommé is garnished with not one, but four varieties of garlic flowers. Dessert choices include white chocolate and buffalo yogurt paired with eucalyptus meringue, apple and lemon basil.

Of course, there is nothing new about using herbs and flowers to embellish restaurant food. Quite the opposite. Yet when I see a pansy or nasturtium poised on, say, a slice of terrine, I tend to roll my eyes, thinking, "So '90s." Around the turn of the millennium, almost all high-end restaurants were adorning everything from the overwrought amuse-bouche to the powdered-sugar-dusted mignardises plate with some sort of edible flower. And when it wasn't flowers, it was petals, or leaves, or even twigs whose purpose was not gastronomic but cosmetic. I'll bet most of it ended up in the garbage.

The decade that followed the precious cuisine of the '90s was dominated by comfort food, which in turn was flooded by he-man dishes, heavy on portion size and light on greens. Yet today we are seeing a more natural push on the plate, thanks no doubt to the popularity of French and Nordic cuisines that favour foraged ingredients. All this emphasis on farm-fresh, organic, local and seasonal has placed chefs directly in nature's path to seek out new ingredients to enliven and embellish their dishes.

For Ferry, inspiration started with his father, who was a chef also, and evolved with chefs who worked closely with gardeners. He reels off names of star chefs like René Redzepi, Alain Passard, Marc Veyrat, Magnus Nilsson and Michel Bras, as well as Normand Laprise, saying, "You can't be a cook in Quebec and not be influenced by Normand Laprise."

It was Laprise who introduced Ferry to gardener Diane Duquet as well as Patrice Fortier of the Société des Plantes in Kamouraska — two people who have helped him and the gardens staff of 80 create a true edible Garden of Eden. Ferry also consults books like Marie-Victorin Frère's *Flore Laurentienne* (Les presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1964), insisting older books must always be on hand for cross-referencing.

"You must chose wisely to harmonize the flavours," Ferry says. "That's the challenge. At first we would put a nasturtium on the plate just to make it pretty. Now we want to emphasize everything that flower has to offer."

The epitome of this flower power would be the "Cuillère floraison" (a.k.a. the Métis Bloom Spoon), a sort of amuse-bouche featuring 15 different flower petals (day lily, sunflower, nasturtium, wild pea, hyssop, angelica flowers, begonia, etc.) placed atop a wild strawberry and sprinkled with a pinch of organic sugar and sea salt. Created originally by ex-Toqué! chef de cuisine Charles-Antoine Crête during a charity fundraiser at the garden, the spoonful of flower petals offers gentle hits of perfume, acid, sweet, acrid and spice, all enhanced with the fruit of the berry and a boost of salt. Wow! This spoonful of bright, summer flavours is sold at both Toqué! and the Estevan Lodge, and I can think of no better way in summer to begin a meal at either restaurant.



Two capelin paired with begonia petals, blanched allium leaves, lemon basil, mustard sprouts, sea rocket, oxalis flowers and heuchera, at the Reford Gardens restaurant in Grand-Métis. Lesley Chesterman

Watching Ferry creating a dish featuring two capelin (a local fish from the smelt family) paired with begonia petals, blanched allium leaves, lemon basil, mustard sprouts, sea rocket, oxalis flowers and a plant that's omnipresent in my garden, heuchera, I begin noting the recipe, but soon give up when he starts to describe the various steps in making the accompanying geranium mayonnaise (the oil is first infused with the geraniums and

filtered before being emulsified). No doubt this is cheffy food, but made with ingredients so rare and seasonal that only those with access to such exquisite and delicate edibles could attempt. “It would be hard and expensive to cook this way at home,” Ferry admits with a sigh. For those interested in adding unusual plants and flowers to their cuisine, he suggests beginning with herbs, garlic flowers, pansies, angelica, dill flowers and hyssop, whose flavour is reminiscent of Thrills gum.

A veteran of the Métis garden’s restaurant for a decade, Ferry says it would be impossible for him now to omit these unique ingredients from his cuisine. The menu also highlights local products and producers, seafood and sustainable fish from the St. Lawrence and native plants foraged from the forests of the Lower St. Lawrence and Gaspésie regions. And his creations are as beautiful to admire as they are delicious, especially considering the truly magnificent surroundings. Asked if he would have a hard time cooking outside this cook’s paradise, he looks up from his beautiful plate, smiles and says, “I don’t think I could ever leave.”

Here are some recipes from Ferry for those game to cook from the garden at home.



The blue poppy cocktail at the Reford Gardens restaurant in Grand-Métis.

Cocktail: The blue poppy

Serves 1

This cocktail is named for the Himalayan blue poppy, the signature flower of the gardens and the first plant that Elsie Reford grew from seed in the 1930s.

Syrup:

- 1/2 cup water
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons rosemary leaves, lightly bruised

1. Bring the water and sugar to a boil in a small pot. Add the rosemary leaves, then remove from heat and cover the pot. Let infuse for 24 hours, strain and reserve in a refrigerated bottle.

Cocktail:

- 1 oz. rosemary syrup
 - 1 1/2 oz. gin
 - 1/2 oz. Curaçao
 - 100 mL tonic water
 - 2 rosemary branches
1. In a cocktail shaker filled with ice, combine the syrup, gin and Curaçao along with a rosemary branch. Shake until chilled, then pour into a martini glass. Top with the tonic water and serve garnished with the other rosemary branch.



Arctic char with verbena butter, lobster consommé and garlic flowers at Reford Gardens restaurant in Grand-Métis. Lesley Chesterman

Arctic char with verbena butter and lobster consommé

Serves 4

I enjoyed this dish at the Reford Gardens dining room at the end of June when all the garlic flowers were in bloom. If you can't find garlic flowers, try to use chive flowers, day lily petals or any other small and colourful edible flowers you can track down.

- 4 cups water
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup salt
- 600 g (about 1 1/4 lbs.) Arctic char filet, skin on
- 1/4 cup verbena butter (recipe follows)

1. Dissolve the sugar and salt in the water. Cut the fish filet into four equal portions, then plunge into the water for 45 minutes.
2. In a large, non-stick pan, melt the butter over low heat, then add the Arctic char filets, skin side down.
3. Turn the heat up to medium and while the fish sears, spoon some of the hot butter over the filets. If the butter begins to darken, add a bit of the cold verbena butter to the pan. When the skin is crisp and the flesh is tender (about 6 minutes), flip over and cook for another minute.

To serve:

- 4 leaves from an allium plant (alternatively, you can use baby leek leaves)
 - A handful of coloured cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
 - An assortment of garlic flowers * (optional)
 - About 3/4 cup lobster consommé (recipe follows)
1. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and blanch the allium leaves or leek leaves for a minute, then plunge into ice water. Remove and pat dry.
 2. Distribute the cherry tomatoes in four shallow serving bowls and place the fish filet in each bowl, skin side up. Add the allium leaves (or baby leek) as well as the flowers.
 3. At the table, right before serving, pour the hot consommé into a small pitcher and then pour about three tablespoons of hot consommé over each portion.

Verbena butter

Makes 1 cup

- 1/2 lb. unsalted butter
 - 10 verbena leaves OR a sachet of verbena herbal tea
1. Melt the butter until warm to the touch, spooning off some of the fat solids if possible. Add the verbena leaves or sachet. Allow to infuse 20 minutes, then filter into a clean jar. Chill until ready to use.

Lobster consommé

Makes about 4 cups

This recipe may look fussy, but if you have all the ingredients on hand, it's simple to make. It can also be made ahead of time when you have any lobster shells on hand and frozen until ready to serve.

- 2 tablespoons butter
- About 1 lb. lobster carcasses (shells)
- 1 cup tomato trimmings (peels and seeds)

- 1 onion
 - 2 small leeks
 - 2 garlic cloves
 - 1 branch thyme
 - 1/2 cup white wine or dry honey wine
 - 5 cups fish stock
 - Handful of celery leaves
 - Handful of parsley
 - 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
 - 2 egg whites
 - Salt
1. In a large pot, melt the butter and add the lobster carcasses. Sauté for about 5 minutes on medium-high heat. Add the tomato trimmings and cook for a further 5 minutes. Add the onion, leeks, garlic and thyme, and fry about 2 minutes longer. Pour over the wine and then add the fish stock. Add the celery leaves, parsley and fennel seeds. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer for about 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until the liquid has reduced by about 1/3. Taste (the flavour should be full-bodied), and check seasonings. Strain the stock into a clean container and chill.
 2. To make the consommé: Whisk the egg whites into the chilled lobster stock and then bring gradually to a boil, stirring slowly with a wooden spoon. Once the stock begins to boil, stop stirring and let the mixture simmer for 15 minutes. Strain the consommé carefully through a fine sieve or a coffee filter. Check seasonings, adding salt if needed. Reheat when ready to serve.
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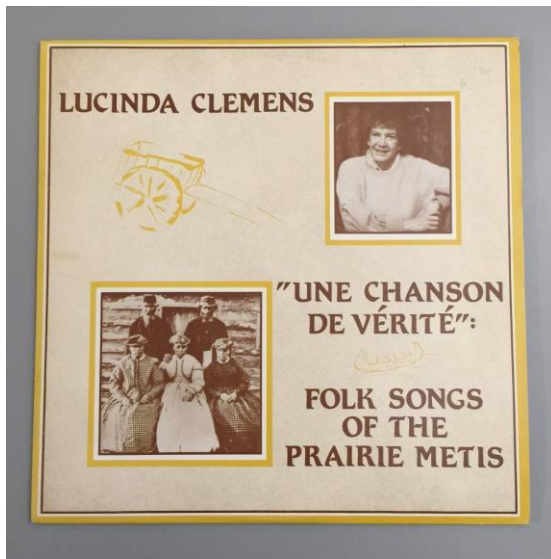
AT A GLANCE

The Estevan Lodge at the Reford Gardens is open for lunch and weekend brunch until the gardens close on Sept. 27. For more information about the dining room and upcoming themed dinners, visit refordgardens.com.

Direct Link: <http://montrealgazette.com/life/food/the-edible-gardens-of-grand-metis-a-chefs-paradise>

Thrift Store Find: Rare recording of Metis folk songs from the 1800s

by [Martin Dunphy](#) on August 13th, 2015 at 5:11 PM



An occasional series that examines odd, interesting, and even valuable items found in thrift stores or at estate, yard, and garage sales. Sometimes, though, it's just old crap.

I picked up this rare 1985 vinyl LP from the newly relocated Vancouver General Hospital thrift store at 2535 East Hastings Street, near Nanaimo Street. (It used to be on Broadway near Main Street.)

Amateur opera singer and musicologist Lucinda Clemens, a native of Saskatchewan's Qu'Appelle Valley, collected the 14 traditional folk songs of the Prairie Métis people contained on *Une Chanson de Vérité* in order to "present a tableau of the joys, the sorrows, and the dreams of the Prairie Métis during their quest for autonomy between the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816 and the Battle of Batoche in 1885."

Unearthed last Louis Riel song included on album

A little Internet sleuthing uncovered some scholarly reviews of the collection and various accounts of the origin and history of the song here titled "Riel's Farewell", which was first introduced by folk-song researcher and teacher Barbara Cass-Beggs in 1963 and which is purported to have been written by Métis leader Louis Riel in prison before his execution in 1885.

Clemens—who sang the songs herself and who, for some reason, copyrighted the recording under the pseudonym Nancy E. G. Hockley—explained in the enclosed notes and lyric sheets her reasons for the sparse musical accompaniment. (She chose piano and harmonium because they were widely available in the nineteenth century, and flute and piccolo because they were mentioned in Métis records from the time. Surprisingly, she rejected the fiddle, as ubiquitous as it may have been in Métis culture at the time, because, she maintained, it was used mostly for dancing, not singing.)

Many songs came from elderly Metis singer

The researcher transcribed and translated the songs herself after travelling, interviewing, and recording subjects; 10 of the traditional tunes about separation, battle, and conflict came from one elderly Métis man, Gaspard Jeannotte.



Music curator and DJ Kevin Howes has compiled two collections of largely forgotten Canadian music.

The record itself, with both the cover and vinyl in mint condition, only cost me \$1.99. Although I no longer own a turntable, I did get a history lesson. And now I will turn it over to someone who will appreciate it much more than myself: local musical historian, DJ, audio curator, and former *Straight* drudge Kevin “Sipreano” Howes.



Check out Howes’s latest project, a great collection of mostly unknown Canadian indigenous recordings called *Native North America, Vol. 1*. (And read Alexander Varty's

article on the record [here](#).) He previously put together a similar compilation, this one of Canadian reggae and soul music in danger of being forgotten, titled *Jamaica to Toronto* (Light in the Attic).

Direct Link: <http://www.straight.com/blog/508861/thrift-store-find-rare-recording-metis-folk-songs-1800s>

Aboriginal Business & Finance

Aboriginal entrepreneurship camp wraps up

By Britton Gray Global News, August 14, 2015 7:54 pm



Students from the FNUiv Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship Camp presented their ideas to a panel of judges.

REGINA – Young entrepreneurs got their chance to showcase their ideas to a panel of judges in Regina.

It was all a part of the First Nations University of Canada's (FNUiv) [Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship Camp](#).

The camp has grade 11 and 12 high-school students team up and brainstorm business ideas. With help from the senior students and business faculty at FNUiv, the students compile presentations and pitch them to a panel of judges.

“It never fails to amaze me the ideas they come up with and then how they begin to evaluate their idea,” said Richard Missens, a member of the business faculty. “They look at target markets, their financials, their start ups and they do all the research, of course with the help of the senior business students and us as faculty.”

The camp also encourages students to think about continuing their education in the world of business.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2166768/aboriginal-entrepreneurship-camp-wraps-up/>

First Nations Bank opens new branch in western Nunavut

Kugluktuk FNBC opens Aug. 18

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, August 18, 2015 - 10:01 am



Kugluktuk is now home to a First Nations Community Banking Centre. (FILE PHOTO)

If you live in the western Nunavut town of Kugluktuk and want to open an account, cash a cheque, make a deposit or do other banking transactions, as of Aug. 18, you're in luck.

That's because the first Nations Bank of Canada opened a First Nations Bank of Canada Community Banking Centre Aug. 18 in the Kugluktuk co-op store.

The centre's opening brings full-service banking to this Kitikmeot community.

"By continuing to expand our reach and bring much-needed services to the North, we are fulfilling our mandate of creating opportunities for Aboriginal people," said Keith Martell, CEO of the First Nations Bank, in a news release on the Kugluktuk expansion.

"Kugluktuk is a growing, thriving community and access to financial services will help people build on their successes. This is what we do. We are Canada's Aboriginal bank, independently owned and operated by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people."

The nearest bank to Kugluktuk, with population of about 1,500, has been the Royal Bank of Canada in the Kitikmeot hub of Cambridge Bay, which, at one point, had considered opening a branch in Kugluktuk as well.

The FNBC — with the support of its largest shareholder, Inuit-owned Atuqtuarvik Corp. — has now opened three community banking centres in Nunavut over the past 18 months under an arrangement with Arctic Co-operatives Ltd.

The expansion of the bank into Nunavut is part of [a deal signed in 2007](#) with Inuit-owned investment company Atuqtuarvik, which purchased 20 per cent of the bank's shares.

Atuqtuarvik made the deal primarily to bring banking services to Nunavut communities where none exist.

Baker Lake and Pond Inlet were already at the top of their list then, given the mining activity ramping up near both communities.

The Baker Lake Community Banking Centre opened in March 2014 and the Pond Inlet Community Banking Centre [opened in October 2014](#).

“We are very pleased to partner with First Nations Bank of Canada to bring essential financial services to the people of the community of Kugluktuk,” said Kono Tattuinee, ACL's president. “We anticipate improved financial literacy and economic benefits, through direct access to financial services, for the members of Kugluktuk Co-op.”

With its focus on Aboriginal communities, FNBC now has the largest percentage of branches and community banking centres north of the 60th parallel, the bank's news release noted.

“Many Inuit communities are under-serviced and we are working to change that,” said Greig Cooper, FNBC's vice president of operations.

“Being in the communities, we have the chance to work shoulder to shoulder with customers, businesses, and community leaders. By understanding their needs, we can create a system that helps support opportunity and prosperity for Aboriginal people.”

The FNBC, founded in 1996 offers Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, corporations and governments personal and business banking services, including loans, mortgages, investments, transaction accounts and cash management.

The bank's Aboriginal shareholders also include groups from the Northwest Territories, Yukon, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta and Quebec, which own over 80 per cent of the bank.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674first_nations_bank_opens_new_branch_in_western_nunavut/

Federal government in court to force 5 First Nations to disclose finances



A group of First Nations protesters hold hands and dance in a circle during a demonstration in Surrey, B.C., in January 2013. (Darryl Dyck / THE CANADIAN PRESS)

Chris Purdy, The Canadian Press

Published Wednesday, August 19, 2015 4:08AM EDT

Last Updated Wednesday, August 19, 2015 5:49PM EDT

SASKATOON -- Lawyers for the federal government were in court Wednesday to persuade a judge to force five First Nations to open their books to the public.

The reserves are protesting the government's transparency law, which since last year requires all First Nations to post their salaries and audited financial statements online.

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt has said the legislation makes financial information more accessible to band members and leads to "more effective, transparent and accountable governance, as well as stronger, more self-sufficient and prosperous communities."

Some band leaders argue the law is about controlling aboriginal communities and breaches their indigenous rights.

"It's bad legislation," said Perry Bellegarde, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, who planned to attend some of the two-day hearing in federal court in Saskatoon.

He said the worst part of the law is that it forces reserves to reveal financial details of businesses that don't rely on government funding, which creates confidentiality and competitiveness issues.

"Transparency and accountability is a good thing, and we totally support that, but it's our own-source revenues that's the big issue ... it's pretty heavy-handed."

Last year, after the government's November deadline had passed for posting finances, it withheld "non-essential" funding from almost 50 reserves that didn't release their information in time.

It proceeded with court action against the five reserves: the Sawridge and Athabasca Chipewyan First Nations in Alberta and the Thunderchild, Ochapowace and Onion Lake bands in Saskatchewan.

Cold Lake First Nation in Alberta was originally on the list, but was dropped from the case after it complied and posted its numbers.

Court cases are also pending against another three bands: the Roseau River Anishinabe in Manitoba, Liard First Nation in Yukon and the Algonquins of Barriere Lake, Que.

This year, bands have until Sept. 1 to post their finances.

"We will take action to ensure First Nation governments comply with the law, which will deliver financial transparency for First Nation members," said Aboriginal Affairs spokesman Stephen Lecce.

In a separate court case, the Onion Lake band is challenging the validity and constitutionality of the law.

One of the reserve's lawyers, Michael Marchen in Edmonton, said no date has been scheduled since the decision in this week's hearing will determine if the challenge moves forward.

He said his office is arguing in Saskatoon for a stay and an injunction exempting the band from complying with the law. He expects lawyers for the other reserves will make similar requests.

Outside the courthouse, several chiefs were expected at a rally in support of the five bands, including Bill Erasmus, who represents the Northwest Territories and the country's Dene people.

He commends the five bands for fighting back.

"This government is not about sitting down with people and working out arrangements," Erasmus said. "They're all about bullying and forcing people and putting pressure on people because they can."

He said the bands he represents have no problem revealing finances to their own people and the government, but it's unfair that the information has to be published for the public to see.

Direct Link: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/federal-government-in-court-to-force-5-first-nations-to-disclose-finances-1.2523329>

First Nations' case against Transparency Act becoming clear

Lawyers gathering for two days in Saskatoon courtroom

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 19, 2015 1:20 PM CT Last Updated: Aug 19, 2015 1:20 PM CT



Onion Lake Cree Nation chief Wallace Fox arrives at court yesterday. (Dan Zakreski/CBC)

The lawyer for the Onion Lake Cree Nation says it would readily provide all the information Ottawa wants under its First Nations Financial Transparency Act – under one condition.

That the information not be made public on the internet.

The federal government is taking eight First Nations to court to force them to comply with the legislation. It has suspended funding to these bands except for that which covers essential services.

'The money we're talking about is Indian money.' - *Robert Hladun*

Robert Hladun is the band's lawyer.

He told the judge that the band already does annual audited statements that follow federal protocols.

These findings are available to band members.

Hladun said making this information public online would hurt the band because it has information related to confidential business dealings.

Further, he said it's not taxpayers' money.

"The money we're talking about is Indian money," he said.

The hearing is scheduled to run two days.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/first-nations-case-against-transparency-act-becoming-clear-1.3196491>

First Nations want Accountability Act suspended pending court challenge

By Betty Ann Adam, The StarPhoenix August 18, 2015



About 100 people march in a demonstration, lead by Dene National Chief Bill Erasmus, second left, during -29 C degree weather in downtown Yellowknife on Friday December 21, 2012. Idle No More organizers oppose the Harper government's recently passed omnibus budget legislation, Bill C-45, and accuse the Tories of trampling on treaty rights.

The federal government is jumping the gun by trying to force First Nations to post financial information online before the constitutionality of the First Nations Financial Transparency Act (FNFTA) has been decided, say supporters of six First Nations scheduled to appear in court in Saskatoon today.

"They should not be leaning on these First Nations to comply with their legislation because the legislation is in question right now before the courts," Dene National Chief Bill Erasmus said.

"What is the rush to get First Nations into court? Is it a political or a legal decision? From all appearances, it is political, since the government does not want to wait for a court decision on constitutionality of the legislation."

Most First Nations in the country has complied with the legislation and posted financial information online.

Chief Wallace Fox of the Onion Lake Cree Nation (OLCN) is asking a federal court judge to stay an application by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (AANDC) that seeks to force six First Nations that have refused to do so to publish their consolidated financial statements, including their chief and councillors' salaries, on the Government of Canada website.

Pending the outcome of its constitutional challenge, Onion Lake also wants the court to prohibit AANDC from withholding funding agreement payments, court documents show.

Onion Lake, along with the Ochapowace and Thunderchild First Nations in Saskatchewan and the Sawridge, Athabasca Chipewyan and Cold Lake First Nations in Alberta, filed the constitutional challenge of the FNFTA in November.

Soon after, the government applied for a court order to force them to submit the information or lose some funding.

The First Nations say the government violated its legal obligation to consult with them before enacting legislation that affects them. They want operation of the legislation to be suspended pending the resolution of the challenge.

A confidentiality order has been applied to some exhibits in the case. Fox said he will wait until after Tuesday's hearing to comment on the matter.

He said "quite a few" members of the First Nation are interested in the legal challenge, which has been publicized through newsletters and on its community radio station.

"We've held a number of forums and presentations in the community, also in the round hall for people that are interested in it to have come out and asked questions, so we've been briefing them."

Erasmus and at least two other AFN regional chiefs have said they will attend court to support the challengers. National AFN Chief Perry Bellegarde is expected to attend on Thursday, the second scheduled day of the hearing.

The federal government set a July 29 deadline for submitting 2014-2015 documents.

In May, Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt said bands that have yet to comply with the law "will see funding for non-essential services withheld" starting Sept. 1.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/life/First+Nations+want+Accountability+suspended+pending+court+challenge/11299761/story.html>

Legality of First Nations transparency act at issue in court hearing

By [Meaghan Craig](#) Reporter Global News, August 20, 2015 9:03 am



SASKATOON – Where does parliament’s authority begin and end? That question is at the heart of a federal court hearing currently underway in Saskatoon.

Five of approximately 50 First Nations who have refused to disclose their financial statements were forced into court after drawing a line in the sand against C27 legislation, commonly known as the *First Nations Financial Transparency Act*.

On Wednesday, a team of lawyers descended on Court of Queen’s Bench along with First Nations chiefs and supporters of those challenging the federal government.

Legal representation presented submissions the entire morning for both the Onion Lake Cree Nation of Saskatchewan and Sawridge First Nation of Slave Lake, Alta.

The three other First Nations involved include the Thunderchild and Ochapowace bands in Saskatchewan and Athabasca Chipewyan First Nations of Alberta.

“We have our First Nation entities, they include our corporation which are in competition with other private entities and public corporations, government corporations and so on,” said Assembly of First Nation regional Chief Bill Erasmus for the Northwest Territories and Dene national chief.

“None of the other corporations have to reveal their sources of funding and spending to the extent that our first nations do.”

In court, counsel for the Onion Lake Cree Nation contested there was no consultation with the federal government before the transparency law was introduced, requiring all First Nations to post salaries and financial statements online by November 2014.

The lawyer for the band submitted the First Nation would gladly hand over the requested documentation as long as it remained confidential.

“Members of our communities have the ability to get the information, all they need to do is go to our band offices ask for it,” added Erasmus.

“What the federal government wants us to do is to publish it to the world and it’s got nothing to do with the rest of the world.”

Counsel representing the Sawridge First Nation argued public disclosure of financial records for First Nations was discriminatory, unconstitutional and the legislation suggested to the public that First Nations leaders are corrupt.

“When are we going to get to the point where we respect First Nations?” asked AFN regional Chief Mike Smith for the Yukon.

“When are we getting point where First Nations governments are recognized on the same levels provincial government, territorial governments, federal governments and general concepts that are really important to Canada?”

On Thursday, three of the chiefs against C27 will hold a press conference and will provide their thoughts on the court proceedings.

This hearing is expected to last only two days.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2174834/legality-of-first-nations-transparency-act-at-issue-in-court-hearing/>

Federal government in court to force five First Nations to disclose finances

SASKATOON — The Canadian Press

Published Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2015 5:08AM EDT

Last updated Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2015 12:19PM EDT

Lawyers for the federal government are to be in court today to persuade a judge to force five First Nations to open their books to the public.

The reserves are protesting the government’s transparency law, which since last year requires all First Nations to post their salaries and audited financial statements online.

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt has said the legislation makes financial information more accessible to band members and leads to “more effective, transparent and accountable governance, as well as stronger, more self-sufficient and prosperous communities.”

Some band leaders argue the law is about controlling aboriginal communities and breaches their indigenous rights.

“It’s bad legislation,” said Perry Bellegarde, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, who plans to attend some of the two-day hearing in federal court in Saskatoon.

He said the worst part of the law is that it forces reserves to reveal financial details of businesses that don’t rely on government funding, which creates confidentiality and competitiveness issues.

“Transparency and accountability is a good thing, and we totally support that, but it’s our own-source revenues that’s the big issue ... it’s pretty heavy-handed.”

The federal government did not respond to requests for comment Tuesday.

Last year, after the government’s November deadline had passed, it withheld “non-essential” funding from almost 50 reserves that had yet to disclose their numbers.

It proceeded with court action against five: the Sawridge and Athabasca Chipewyan First Nations in Alberta and the Thunderchild, Ochapowace and Onion Lake bands in Saskatchewan.

Cold Lake First Nation in Alberta was originally on the list, but was dropped from the case after it complied and posted its finances.

A release from Dene Nation with the Assembly of First Nations said the government recently filed an application against another band — Liard First Nation in Yukon.

In a separate court case, the Onion Lake band is challenging the validity and constitutionality of the law.

One of the reserve’s lawyers, Michael Marchen in Edmonton, said no date has been scheduled since the decision in this week’s hearing will determine if the challenge moves forward.

He said his office will be arguing today for a stay and an injunction exempting the band from complying with the law. He expects lawyers for the other reserves will make similar requests.

Outside the courthouse, several chiefs are expected at a rally in support of the five bands, including Bill Erasmus, who represents the Northwest Territories and the country's Dene people.

He commends the five bands for fighting back.

"This government is not about sitting down with people and working out arrangements," Erasmus said. "They're all about bullying and forcing people and putting pressure on people because they can."

He said the bands he represents have no problem revealing finances to their own people and the government, but it's unfair that the information has to be published for the public to see.

Bellegarde said he hopes that if the judge rules in the bands' favour, the government will agree to revamp the law.

He'll be reaching out during the federal election campaign to party leaders to ask them to support a review of several pieces of legislation affecting First Nations, he added.

Direct Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/federal-government-in-court-to-force-five-first-nations-to-disclose-finances/article26013392/>

Aboriginal Community Development

National chiefs echo Manitoba First Nations' stance on flood diversion plan

'We need immediate action to help the evacuees and victims,' Assembly of First Nations chief says

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 14, 2015 12:17 PM CT Last Updated: Aug 14, 2015 12:34 PM CT



Assembly of First Nations national Chief Perry Bellegarde said he stands behind the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs in their indictment of a recent federal and provincial plan to spend \$495 million on flood diversion projects around Lake Manitoba. (The Canadian Press)

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has joined the chorus of voices criticizing the federal and provincial governments' planned investment in flood prevention projects in Manitoba, arguing the focus should be on helping displaced First Nation flood victims.

On July 31, the provincial and federal governments announced a commitment of \$495 million to flood prevention projects around Lake Manitoba communities like Lake St. Martin, a reserve that has been flooded-out since 2011. About 2,000 evacuees have been [living in hotels and apartments since then](#).



The \$100-million Lake St. Martin channel, which opened in November 2011, is an emergency outlet to redirect water from Lake St. Martin to Big Buffalo Lake, where it flows naturally into the Dauphin River and eventually into Lake Winnipeg. (Province of Manitoba)

The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) came out against the announcement earlier this week, claiming First Nations were not consulted ahead of the decision.

While the assembly isn't against flood diversion projects in general, Grand Chief Derek Nepinak said until outstanding damages and reimbursement claims are settled, AMC "[does] not support any more bypass surgery on the Interlake."

And on Friday, AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde sided with the AMC.

"I fully support the position of First Nations in Manitoba as they assert their rights to be directly involved in designing and implementing a long-term solution to flooding in their region," Bellegarde said in a statement.



Many cottages around Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin were flooded during high water and storms in 2011. (CBC)

"First Nations families in Manitoba have been displaced for more than four years as a result of the 2011 flood evacuations. We need immediate action to help the evacuees and victims. It is unacceptable that agreements and plans are being made by governments without First Nations decision-making."

Eric Robinson, Manitoba's aboriginal affairs minister, told CBC News earlier this week that allotting a specific amount of money to the project was a critical first step toward helping affected First Nations recover.

"The first thing that we had to do was identify the federal and provincial dollars. They were matching and we did that, and now the consultation phase has to commence," he said.

The flood infrastructure plan calls for a second outlet channel from Lake Manitoba to Lake St. Martin to be constructed and for the current one to be enlarged. The new channel will be a permanent one with an outlet to Lake Winnipeg, bypassing Dauphin River First Nation.

Bellegarde added First Nations have already been "working to rebuild their communities and mitigate future flooding."

"These efforts must be respected and supported and First Nations must be involved in any decisions that impact their families, homes and work territories. It's not only the right thing to do, it's a Crown obligation."

The province has pledged to spend \$330 million, while the federal government promised \$165 million, on the pending diversion project

"The permanent structure will significantly reduce the economic burden that chronic flooding has had on the Province of Manitoba," the province said in a statement on Friday.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/national-chiefs-echo-manitoba-first-nations-stance-on-flood-diversion-plan-1.3191309>

Kirby Whiteduck: The Algonquin people don't need to be saved from the Zibi project

[Kirby Whiteduck](#)

[More from Kirby Whiteduck](#)

Published on: August 14, 2015 | Last Updated: August 15, 2015 9:48 AM EDT



Algonquins of Pikwakanagan Chief Kirby Whiteduck, left, chats with Windmill Development executive chairman, Jeff Westeinde, center and Wanda Thusky, Algonquin-Anishnabe Advisory Committee member, after a press conference at the future of site of Windmill Development's Zibi project on the Gatineau side of the Chaudiere Falls Thursday May 21, 2015. The project is the first one in Canada to be endorsed by UK-based Bioregional as a One Planet Community. (Darren Brown/Ottawa Citizen) Darren Brown / Ottawa Citizen

There has been a lot of very warranted attention on First Nations issues lately, particularly following the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Report.

While I don't wish to dwell on the past or the conditions of our communities, the truth is that the Algonquin Nation has been virtually invisible in the heart of Canada's capital, and it is fair to say that First Nations and non-First Nations people do not know each other very well in this region.

Reconciliation will require a new and positive way for both cultures to relate harmoniously and collaboratively, creating a sense of togetherness of which few examples exist today to be inspired by.

Yet one such example is emerging right in the core of the National Capital: Zibi, expected to be the world's most environmentally and socially sustainable community.

With the deep connections and inroads that are being built between Windmill Developments and the Algonquin-Anishinabe communities, Zibi is a precedent-setting and landmark opportunity for a new model of collaboration.

Through arts, culture, jobs, training, youth mentorships, and the formal recognition that the site is on unceded Algonquin territory, Zibi will be a meaningful and authentic manifestation of the influence and presence of the Algonquin Nation in the heart of the nation's capital — a vibrant living space and development model that encourages cross-cultural integrity and inclusion.

Windmill has offered a hand in friendship and we have accepted it. By choosing to partner on Zibi, we are proud to exercise our community's right to self-determination, as enshrined in Article 3 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which states that indigenous people are free to pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

Unfortunately, there are some who doubt the ability of Algonquin-Anishinabe to make decisions in the best interest of our people.

I speak of a small but vocal number of groups and individuals that have come out speaking against the Zibi project, purportedly on behalf of the Algonquin-Anishinabe. I note that most within this movement are not First Nations, let alone Algonquin, yet they are aggressively advocating for the conversion of the Zibi land on Chaudière and Albert Islands to park land, and returned to the stewardship of the Algonquin people.

Ironically, the groups and individuals behind this campaign have not consulted the Algonquin-Anishinabe community before taking this position on *our* behalf. Had they consulted us, we would have asked them to support our decision to partner with Windmill: a decision made by Algonquin Anishinabe for Algonquin Anishinabe within Algonquin Anishinabe territory.

Instead, they criticize and demean people and the positive relationships developing between cultures, and they do so in our name. They even fundraise to support what is in reality 'their' cause.

Perhaps these groups do not realize their aggressive lobby campaign undermine 'our' right to self-determination.

To see Zibi as simply a greedy condo project, a meagre job generator or a dubious financial transaction is to miss the bigger, more positive story of reconciliation. Working in partnership with the private sector is the only option that can deliver true and lasting benefits to current and future generations (see www.zibi-i-site.ca).

In today's spirit of truth and reconciliation, our people are eager to heal from the past and rebuild a positive relationship between First Nations and non-First Nations. Non-First Nations who want to support us in this endeavour (and I believe this to be the majority) need to seriously evaluate whether their actions help or hinder.

Kirby Whiteduck is Chief of the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation, situated on the shores of the Bonnechere River and Golden Lake in Renfrew County, Ontario. Among other pursuits, Chief Whiteduck is the author of Algonquin Traditional Culture, published in 2002. His book details the traditional culture of the Algonquins of the Kitchissippi Valley at the early period of European contact.

Direct Link: <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/kirby-whiteduck-the-algonquin-people-dont-need-to-be-saved-from-the-zibi-project>

Meet Me at the Bell Tower welcomes local immigrant community

Weekly gathering in Winnipeg's North End invites newcomers to 'break stereotypes'

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 14, 2015 10:07 AM CT Last Updated: Aug 14, 2015 9:21 PM CT



The weekly Meet Me at the Bell Tower gathering on Winnipeg's Selkirk Avenue on Friday evening. (CBC)

An initiative that aims to end violence in Winnipeg's North End welcomed newcomers to Canada into the fold Friday night, at a meeting that organizers hope will "break stereotypes."

Meet Me at the Bell Tower started in the fall of 2011. The gathering, led by Aboriginal Youth Opportunities (AYO), brings people from the neighbourhood together for a weekly meeting in the area of Selkirk Avenue and Powers Street.

This week, organizers extended an invitation to the city's immigrant population to participate.

"We probably have, like, over 100 people easily," said Lenard Monkman, an organizer with AYO.

"We're usually used to having just regulars here, and today has been overwhelming in terms of how many people we were able to get out here."

Mandela Kuet, a member of Winnipeg's South Sudanese community, said he was excited to take part because immigrants have a lot in common with Canada's indigenous community.

"We were very passionate about being youth leaders and being active in our community and advocating for our rights and the rights of young people," said Kuet.



One of the several people who rang the bell at Meet Me at the Bell Tower on Friday evening. (CBC)

"[We want]

to make sure our stories are heard through our lenses and so that other people can see where we are coming from."

Kuet said his first impression of Winnipeg was that it, and Canada in general, was safe.

"I had a lot of access to things that I couldn't have before," said Kuet, adding the Friday night meeting provides immigrants further incentive to immerse themselves in the community.

"It's a good chance to build relationships, to create dialogue and partnerships and get young people to come together to work together and to understand one another."

Challenging stereotypes

Monkman said he is looking forward to getting to know Kuet, his neighbour, better.

"We both live in the same hood," said Monkman. "I grew up in the North End and he grew up very much in the North End.... Just really never having that opportunity to connect with each other; it's a great chance to be able to get together."

Monkman said the meeting is also about challenging harmful or misleading attitudes about indigenous and immigrant populations.

"If [immigrants] could come to the city, I always say Meet Me at the Bell Tower is the best place to meet, to break stereotypes," said Monkman.

"We want people to know that there are people out here [who] care about the city, [who] care about race relations. We are going to live together; there is going to continue to be immigration and it's important for us to work together."

Food and music from indigenous and Sudanese cultures were offered at the gathering, which began at 6 p.m.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/meet-me-at-the-bell-tower-welcomes-local-immigrant-community-1.3191230>

Project aiming to prevent bad water quality

Posted: Saturday, August 15, 2015 6:00 am | *Updated: 6:02 am, Sat Aug 15, 2015.*

By Sandi Krasowski, CJ staff

A water treatment, training and monitoring project based out of Dryden is working to prevent boil water advisories in remote First Nation communities in Northwestern Ontario.

"The Safe Water Project, a new and innovative approach . . . is addressing the challenge of delivering safe, clean drinking water to First Nation communities," Keewaytinook Okimakanak CEO Geordi Kakepetum said this week.

KO's public works manager Barry Strachan outlined the Safe Water Project to news reporters and others gathered at an open house this week at the organization's water treatment training facility in Dryden.

Strachan said the project, which incorporates water treatment plant operator training, water monitoring and deployment of trained employees to member First Nations, has already prevented or shortened two boil water advisories at KO-member First Nations since May.

The project empowers communities to effectively manage their own drinking water through the early detection, diagnosis and treatment of contaminants, and support local water operators and personnel in addressing adverse water quality events as they occur, he said.

“We believe this project . . . is the strategy needed to help remove boil water advisories (in First Nations across the North). There should be no question about the water quality coming out a tap – that is the goal of this project,” Strachan said.

Conservative Kenora incumbent Greg Rickford and Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day congratulated the organization (a tribal council serving six First Nation communities in Northwestern Ontario) on its work in setting up and implementing the project.

Rickford called KO’s training centre in Dryden “a benchmark for the region and country.”

“You are focusing on the human capacity side” of clean water delivery, getting more value out of water treatment facilities and providing employment at the same time. “This is extraordinary work,” Rickford said.

Day added that one of the most pressing issues is safe, clean water in First Nation communities.

“This is fantastic work that’s happening here,” he said, adding that the Safe Water Project provides a solution to “delivering safer water to our communities.”

KO is also working with other tribal councils to try and expand the project to other First Nations communities in Ontario.

They have received interest from communities across Canada about its approach, and is interested in making as many people as possible aware of the success that it is having in delivering clean drinking water to its member communities.

According to research by the Council of Canadians, there were at least 1,838 drinking water advisories in Canada as of January 2015. Of these, 169 were in 126 First Nation communities.

Ontario has the highest number of advisories in First Nation communities (79), followed by British Columbia (35), Saskatchewan (24), Alberta (17), the Atlantic (seven) and Quebec (two).

Direct Link: http://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/local/project-aiming-to-prevent-bad-water-quality/article_49fa9738-4308-11e5-a614-f30e14f01f7f.html

Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement

Prominent aboriginal law expert disciplined for misconduct

**Jack Woodward suspended for one month for writing hundreds of
cheques between business accounts**

By Derrick Penner, Vancouver Sun August 14, 2015



Jack Woodward, seen here in Edmonton in 2010, has been disciplined by the Law Society of B.C. For “conduct unbecoming a lawyer.”

A lawyer who helped push the landmark Tsilhqot’in court decision in its early stages has been suspended by the Law Society of B.C. for writing bad cheques between his own business accounts.

Jack Woodward, a Queen’s counsel, was cited by the law society in November 2014 on allegations of writing dozens of cheques back and forth from two personal accounts between January and October of 2011 when he knew there weren’t sufficient funds in one or both accounts to cover the amounts — and did so to hide the fact there wasn’t enough money to satisfy all the cheques.

On Thursday, a hearing panel of the law society accepted “an admission of conduct unbecoming a lawyer” from Woodward, and issued oral reasons for the proposed discipline, a one-month suspension, to begin Aug. 13.

In a news release, the law society said written reasons for the decision will be released at a later date.

In its citation, the law society said Woodward wrote the series of more than 400 cheques between an account at his law corporation and an account for the Harbour House Hotel on Salt Spring Island, a property for which he is a shareholder.

In a prepared statement, Woodward said he is “truly sorry for the conduct that led to the proceeding,” and it won’t happen again.

“I take full responsibility for my actions and accept that a lawyer is held to a higher standard of conduct than the general public,” Woodward said.

“The finding against me is ‘conduct unbecoming,’ which means that even in my non-law business affairs I have to act completely above reproach. I accept that.”

He said the matter didn’t involve any of his clients, trust funds or his legal practice. It was related to separate non-law business transactions.

“No person or company lost any money, and the (financial institution) was repaid promptly and in full,” he said.

Woodward’s counsel, David Rosenberg, said his he wouldn’t comment further on the case until the hearing panel releases its written reasons for the decision.

Woodward was not involved in the historic Supreme Court of Canada’s hearing of the Tsilhqot’in case, which saw the court grant the First Nation title to 1,750 square kilometres of land in B.C.’s Cariboo region, but he was co-counsel on the file when it was first filed in B.C. Supreme Court.

Rosenberg said Woodward, author of one of the leading texts on aboriginal law in Canada, is now semi-retired having resigned the partnership in the Victoria law firm he helped found. He lives in Campbell River, where continues to write on legal issues.

Read more:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/Prominent+aboriginal+expert+disciplined+misconduct/11291595/story.html#ixzz3j70rHNye>

Aboriginal Education & Youth

The First Nations Summit calls for the firing of Stephanie Cadieux

Vancouver, BC, Canada / News Talk 980 CKNW | Vancouver's News. Vancouver's Talk
[Chantal Coschizza](#)

August 14, 2015 04:57 pm



The First Nations Summit is adding their voice to the many who are calling for the firing of Minister of Children and Families, Stephanie Cadieux.

These calls come after the Ministry moved to appeal a Supreme Court Decision finding them responsible for taking four children away from their mother, and placing them in the care of their abusive father.

One of the children was sexually abused by her father because of this decision.

Political executive of the First Nations Summit, Cheryl Casmier, says there need to be changes made in the Ministry.

“It’s totally contradictory to what it is the Ministry of Children and Families is supposed to be all about. It’s supposed to be about protecting children, keeping them from harms way. You know for them to even appeal this? What does this even say about their mandate?”

Casmier says it is disrespectful for the Ministry to question what the family went through, and to drag them through another court case.

“Families are losing a lot of trust, there definitely needs to be some kind of investigation and a review. There needs to be some extreme changes made.”

She says too many children have been put in harm's way with Cadieux in charge.

Stephanie Cadieux says she is aware public confidence in her Ministry has taken a hit throughout this case.

Earlier, she appointed former deputy minister Bob Plecas to look into the case to find out what exactly happened.

Direct Link: <http://www.cknw.com/2015/08/14/first-nations-summit-calls-for-stephanie-cadieuxs-firing/>

Students attend aboriginal summer camp



Far left, Nicole Walter Rowan, program coordinator with Lakehead Public Schools, talks with some students at the first Meno-Bimaadiziwin Aboriginal Youth program on Tuesday, which was held at Lakehead University.

By Jeff Labine, CJ Staff

Posted: Thursday, August 20, 2015 6:00 am

Some Lakehead Public Schools students got to spend the last month of their summer vacation participating in an aboriginal youth leadership camp.

This was the first time the public school board has hosted the week-long Meno-Bimaadiziwin Aboriginal Youth program. The 25 students were housed at Lakehead University during their stay.

The program's goal was to focus on developing leadership skills, healthy relationships and positive self-esteem.

The students, who were in grades 6 to 9, came from a number of different schools from McKellar Park to Algonquin Avenue.

The summer program is modeled after a program in the North Bay area that was started by retired OPP officer George Couchie.

Nicole Walter Rowan, program coordinator at Lakehead Public Schools, called it a great learning and leadership development opportunity for the students.

“The kids arrived here on Sunday and we’re going to finish up on Friday with a graduation ceremony,” she said.

“The kids are having an amazing amount of learning opportunities. The kids have teachings around their culture and history. George did a session with the kids this morning about the history of residential schools and some of the history of our country that we may not have experienced. These kids have come together from six different schools and got to know each other really quickly and to support one another.”

To gauge the program’s success, she said they are gathering feedback from the students in order to improve the program going forward.

She said they also want these students to come back and become mentors who future participants.

Walter Rowan also explained that having the camp at the university was also a way for them to help introduce the students to the campus.

“Holding it at Lakehead University provides greater opportunities,” she said. “These kids get a chance to live on campus and see Lakehead University or any other post-secondary institution . . . as a facility that is there’s. This is their university and their community.”

Walter Rowan wanted to thank all the community partners who helped make the program happen including the university, Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre and the OPP.

Couchie said they want to help steer the next generation to a more positive future through education.

“Kids between 12 and 16 is where we lose our youth,” Couchie said. “It’s amazing you will see a kid who is 12 at a birthday party all excited but then four years later they end up in jail or wherever. Those four years are such an important part of them learning about their culture. For me, when I started learning about my culture, I started understanding why our communities were so dysfunctional.”

He said when they discussed topics like residential schools, the students were able to understand as they had family members who were survivors.

Direct Link: http://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/local/students-attend-aboriginal-summer-camp/article_c44437c8-46e7-11e5-9482-9f03e2dd49be.html

Aboriginal Health

Breastfeeding could significantly cut illnesses in aboriginal babies

SIDS, gastrointestinal infection, respiratory tract infection and ear infections could all drop

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 17, 2015 9:22 AM CT Last Updated: Aug 18, 2015 9:55 AM CT



Nearly four out of five aboriginal mothers, including Laetitia Levavasseur, breastfeed their babies. A paper published today shows that raising that number even higher could significantly reduce the number of common infections in aboriginal babies. (CBC)

A new study has found that encouraging First Nations, Inuit and Métis mothers to breastfeed would be a simple way to significantly cut down the high rates of common infection — and even deaths — seen in aboriginal babies in Canada.

Dr. Kathryn McIsaac, with the Centre for Research on Inner City Health of St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto, says even she was surprised by the results.

"I think this really gives policy makers and government officials what we need to be putting emphasis into breastfeeding programs," she says.



Dr. Kathryn McIsaac says the onus should be on hospitals and health centres to take the lead on breastfeeding. (submitted)

All babies benefit from breastfeeding, according to McIsaac's paper published in the Canadian Journal of Public Health. But aboriginal babies could benefit even more so because they suffer higher rates of common ear infections, respiratory tract infections, gastrointestinal infections and SIDS.

After crunching the numbers, McIsaac estimated that breastfeeding on reserve First Nations babies could cut ear infections by 11 per cent, gastrointestinal infections by 41 per cent, hospitalizations for lower respiratory tract infections by 26 per cent and SIDS by 25 per cent.

Breastfeeding could also make a significant dent in those conditions for off reserve First Nations, Inuit and Métis babies.

Right now the rate of breastfeeding among indigenous women in Canada (78 per cent) is about 10 per cent lower than the general population (87 per cent).

Hospitals, health centres should take the lead



Levasseur, who has two small children in Yellowknife, knew she wanted to breastfeed her children, even though it wasn't easy. (CBC)

Laetitia Levasseur, a mother of two in Yellowknife, knew she wanted to breastfeed her children, even though it wasn't easy. "I was like, I don't want to do this anymore. It hurts. I'm done."

Levasseur was fortunate to have a midwife and a husband to encourage her. Many smaller, remote communities don't offer any programs for support.

Promoting breastfeeding among aboriginal women is one solution, McIsaac says.

"However, we recommend shifting the bulk of the responsibility for failure to breastfeed away from the woman and onto the health-care system, where hospitals and community-based health programs should take the lead."

McIsaac recommends programs delivered through the health care system, by indigenous people and for indigenous people.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/breastfeeding-could-significantly-cut-illnesses-in-aboriginal-babies-1.3193519>

First Nations health improvements the goal of new sensitivity training program

One out of every five health care workers in B.C. has taken the training so far, with positive results

By On The Island, [CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 16, 2015 6:00 PM PT Last Updated: Aug 16, 2015 6:00 PM PT



Leslie Varley, director of aboriginal health with the Provincial Health Services Authority, told On The Island that the Indigenous Cultural Safety Training Program is already having a positive impact on relations between aboriginal patients and the health care system in B.C.

Aboriginal people are less likely than other members of society to visit the doctor or seek health care, possibly because health care workers are unfamiliar with aboriginal culture, according to B.C.'s Health Services Authority.

The [Indigenous Cultural Safety Training Program](#) aims to combat that by offering cultural sensitivity training to all employees of British Columbia's health care system.

"A very common issue in the health care system is bias and stereotyping," says Leslie Varley, director of aboriginal health with the Provincial Health Services Authority.

"When an aboriginal person comes into emergency, and they're stumbling a bit or slurring their words, the first assumption is, 'This person is drunk,' and they might not look further than that. But they might have a health problem or they might be diabetic and in need of health care."

Varley says that for many aboriginal people, being subject to these assumptions and the historical legacy of colonialism like residential schools and Indian hospitals have created a sense of distrust for the health care system.

She believes that if health care workers are aware of this and can address it, it might lead to better health care outcomes for First Nations people in B.C.

Training providers to accommodate

In addition to combating their own biases, the program teaches health care providers about some ways they can adjust their practice to better accommodate aboriginal patients.

Varley says some examples of this are allowing a traditional healer to supplement a hospital's work or a spiritual healer to play music or provide moral support.

"We're trying to support health care providers to let them know that these are part of traditional aboriginal healing and this is how we can respectfully support aboriginal patients and their families," Varley says.

Varley says one positive outcome she has heard of is that doctors are more willing to listen to aboriginal patients and "negotiate" on treatment, which could mean looking for cheaper medication or being more flexible about appointment scheduling so rural patients can make them on time.

Feedback positive so far

The program has been underway for much of 2015, and currently has trained about 20,000 of the estimated 100,000 people working in the provincial health care system.

Varley says that early feedback has been promising so far, especially when it comes to physicians.

"We've had a lot of evaluations come back and tell us this has transformed health care practice," she says.

"[Physicians] are sometimes perplexed, they ask, 'why aren't my aboriginal patients coming back? What's going on?' And now they're saying, 'A-ha, I get it, this is what I need to do to change my practice.'"

Varley says that while the training has been designed with the health care system in mind, it could be beneficial for anyone in Canadian society.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/first-nations-health-improvements-the-goal-of-new-sensitivity-training-program-1.3193099>

New sculpture at Kelowna General Hospital embraces healing

by [Alistair Waters - Kelowna Capital News](#)

posted Aug 19, 2015 at 9:00 AM



Artist Chad Pratch with Movement, the sculpture he created for Aboriginal CATCH. The sculpture is on permanent display in the new outdoor courtyard at Kelowna General Hospital.

— image credit: Alistair Waters/Capital News

Ten years ago, Chad Pratch found out his great-grandmother was Metis. It was a secret she took to her grave but one his uncle, a police detective, was able to unearth.

Pratch didn't know it then, but within a few years that heritage would lead the then UBCO art student to be asked to create a sculpture honouring young aboriginal children in the Central Okanagan and their families, a theme he depicts in his work as children in a canoe moving on from the legacies left by Canada's residential school system.

"When I found out I was 1/16th Metis, I didn't think that much about it," said Pratch, 32, as he prepared his Movement sculpture in the new outdoor courtyard of Kelowna General Hospital for its public unveiling this afternoon.

He said when he was first asked to create the work, he was hesitant. He did not really consider himself aboriginal and did not know if he could do it, coming from what he considered a non-aboriginal background.

His great-grandmother kept her aboriginal identity secret all her life, having been a residential school student and someone who had felt the pain and humiliation associated with her time there.

But Pratch said with lot of support from the local aboriginal community, the sculpture took shape in his mind, first as a wall-mounted relief and then, at the request of KHG, as a full-blown sculpture.

“I’m a real watered-down aboriginal,” said Pratch with a smile about his initial hesitance. “What did I know about (the residential school experience and legacy)?”

But as the work moved from his vision to a reality, it became a more personal piece for him, in part as a tribute to his great-grandmother Mary Elizabeth (Ladouceur) Jones, who he said obviously felt she had to hide her aboriginal heritage, even from her family.

Commissioned by Aboriginal CATCH (Community Action Toward Children’s Health), Movement consists of a pile of red bricks, representing the crumbling residential school system, metal feathers springing up from the bricks representing those who survived and did not survive the schools and floating on the bricks, a metal canoe carrying five children, some with their arms outstretched to embrace the future.

“The canoe seemed like a good symbol for moving forward,” said Pratch, who completed the work in 2008 but had to wait seven years for a place to be found to display it. In the end, Kelowna General Hospital agreed it should go in its new outdoor courtyard between the Centennial Building and the new Interior Heart and Surgical Centre.

The delay, caused in part by the search for a place to display it and then by construction of the two new hospital buildings, had Pratch, by now a teacher in Calgary, considering scraping the pieces of the sculpture rather than keeping them stored in his father’s garage. “When I got the email (that the time had come for the installation), I was like, what sculpture? Oh, yea, that one. I remembered” said Pratch laughing.

Direct Link: <http://www.kelownacapnews.com/news/322299331.html>

First Nations adults more than twice as likely to die from avoidable causes

Statistics Canada study compared First Nations adults, non-indigenous Canadians under 75

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 19, 2015 7:28 PM ET Last Updated: Aug 20, 2015 3:15 PM ET



A new Statistics Canada report paints a disturbing picture of the quality and length of life for aboriginal people in this country.

It finds First Nations adults have more than twice the risk of dying under the age of 75 from avoidable causes than non-aboriginal people.

Many are hoping the report will send a message during this federal election campaign.

Brian Maybee lives on the street in Winnipeg, and he is a living example of what the report talks about. He has cancer, a respiratory illness and substance-abuse issues.

"They said as long as I keep doing this and smoking, I'm going to be dead before I'm 50 and I'm 41, almost 42," said Maybee, still wearing his bracelet from his most recent hospital admission.

Avoidable causes, lack of action



A new report out from Statistics Canada finds First Nations adults have more than twice the risk of dying from avoidable causes than non-aboriginal people. Brian Maybee says he is close to becoming one of those statistics. (CBC)

Statistics Canada researchers looked at 15 years of data as part of the report. In some cases, researchers found the risk of death for First Nations men and women was five times that of non-indigenous Canadians. Those carrying the highest risk were in the youngest age groups.

Avoidable causes of death include injury and diseases such as tuberculosis, pneumonia and breast cancer. These are illnesses that can be treated successfully through early detection and screening.

Other contributing factors to an early death include alcohol and drug abuse, education and income levels and access to health-care services.

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- This study involved 61,000 First Nations and 2.5 million non-indigenous Canadians between the ages of 25 to 74.
 - It excludes people who weren't enumerated in the 1991 long-form census.
 - In Canada, avoidable mortality represents 70 per cent of all deaths that occur before age 75.
-

"As a researcher, I have to wonder how many reports do we need until we ask for action," asks Josée Lavoie, head of the Centre for Aboriginal Health Research at the University of Manitoba.



Josée Lavoie, head of the Centre for Aboriginal Health Research at the University of Manitoba, has seen the factors leading to unhealthy and short lives for aboriginal people. (CBC)

Lavoie says these statistics are "the results of racism, the legacy of residential school, and the decades of neglect of the on-reserve infrastructure.

"To me, water, housing, health care on reserve are a priority, and food security. Off reserve, we need to look at equitable access and respectful access to care."

Election issue

Lavoie blames generations of neglect by all levels of government for the elevated health risks faced by Indigenous Peoples. She'd like to see this become an issue in the current federal election.

'They don't care about us here, they just wish we'd all disappear.' - *Brian Maybee*

"Unless we're prepared to pressure our politicians to invest in First Nation health, we're not going to see changes," says Lavoie.

That's part of the message at an information session on Wednesday in Winnipeg's Indian and Metis Friendship Centre. It was put on by the Southern Chiefs Organization.

Grand Chief Terrance Nelson wants to see aboriginal people vote so politicians will take issues like this more seriously.

"We want to make every candidate understand that we are going to be out there voting, and they will vote for the people that are actually dealing with their issues," Nelson said.

Back on the streets, Maybee doesn't have hope that anything will change for him or his friends. He doesn't think Canadians or politicians are paying attention.

"They don't care about us here, they just wish we'd all disappear," said Maybee.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/first-nations-adults-more-than-twice-as-likely-to-die-from-avoidable-causes-1.3196496>

Ontario First Nations say coroners don't visit sites of unexpected deaths

GLORIA GALLOWAY

OTTAWA — The Globe and Mail

Published Thursday, Aug. 20, 2015 5:05PM EDT

Last updated Thursday, Aug. 20, 2015 9:44PM EDT

First Nations leaders say coroners who are required to investigate unexpected deaths on remote Ontario reserves routinely ignore the law by failing to personally attend the scene – raising questions about whether the post-mortem analyses are adequate to recognize and address gaps in the northern health-care system.

As reported by The Globe and Mail on Wednesday, Brody Meekis died of strep throat in May, 2014, in Sandy Lake, 500 kilometres north of Thunder Bay. No coroner immediately arrived in the community to ask nurses at the local medical station how a curable illness could have taken the life of a healthy five-year-old boy.

Nor did an investigating coroner travel to Pikangikum, near the Manitoba border, five months before Brody's death to discern how an unnamed four-year-old girl could have succumbed to the same entirely treatable disease.

Julian Falconer, the lawyer for the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) which represents 49 First Nations communities including Sandy Lake, said the point of coroners' investigations is to protect the living by assessing what, if anything, went wrong.

If a coroner had travelled to Pikangikum after the death of the girl "at the time, on the scene, in that fashion ... would Brody Meekis have died?" Mr. Falconer said. "Of course we will never know with any certainty what impact an investigating coroner might or might not have had in protecting Brody. We will never know. And that's not a satisfactory state of affairs."

Alvin Fiddler, the Grand Chief of NAN, has written to Dirk Huyer, the chief coroner for Ontario, to say investigating coroners must show up when children die on reserves.

Not only was there no medical authority to communicate in person with the families of Brody Meekis and the Pikangikum girl about the causes of their children's deaths, Mr. Fiddler wrote, "it remains a serious concern that the investigation that your office purportedly managed did not collect statements from the nurses involved."

In Brody's case, the boy was viewed after death by a member of the Sandy Lake police service who reported his observations to the coroner. Brody's body was then flown to Kenora for an autopsy.

Mr. Fiddler pointed to a 2008 report that followed a wide-ranging inquiry into pediatric forensic pathology in Ontario, in which Justice Stephen Goudge of the Ontario Court of Appeal said investigating coroners should not assume they can do their jobs from afar.

"Although it is recognized by everyone that investigating coroners may frequently be unable to attend the death scenes in a timely way because of weather, distances, and travelling logistics, it does not follow that their non-attendance should be presumed or effectively be treated as the norm," Justice Goudge wrote. "The death investigation is enhanced by their attendance in ways that are not always fully compensated for by surrogates, technological substitutes, or telephone conversations."

Michael Wilson, the regional supervising coroner for Northwestern Ontario, said the coroners in the region perform those duties on a part-time basis.

“Most of them are either emergency or family physicians, so it would be really unreasonable for me to expect them to take a day and neglect their living patients to go and investigate a death,” Dr. Wilson said. “Where you have geographically a widely scattered population, it is just logistically and geographically not possible to get people to every scene at the time of the death.”

Cheryl Mahyr, spokeswoman for Dr. Huyer, offered a similar explanation. “Our preference is to have coroners attend scenes but when that isn’t possible, efforts are made to maintain close communication with investigative personnel at the scene,” she said in an e-mail. The low volume of cases in the province’s north does not justify hiring dedicated coroners, she said.

Still, “all Ontarians deserve high-quality death investigation services that are effective and sustainable, regardless where they live,” Ms. Mahyr said. Dr. Huyer, she added, “is prepared to work with First Nations communities to explore ways to improve service delivery as this is a priority for him.”

But Mr. Fiddler wants to know why a problem that has been recognized for many years has not yet been addressed.

“Our communities still experience regular failure by the investigating coroner to treat the deaths of their family members as matters worthy of the investigating coroner’s personal attendance,” Mr. Fiddler wrote in his letter to Dr. Huyer. “It is difficult for our communities not to perceive that the deaths of their children are somehow of less importance.”

Direct Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ontario-first-nations-say-coroners-should-visit-sites-of-unexpected-deaths/article26040739/>

The system failed my son

The death of five-year-old Brody Meekis from a strep throat infection has cast a critical light on the inadequacies of health-care delivery on First Nations reserves, reports **Gloria Galloway** in Sandy Lake, Ont.

Gloria Galloway

Sandy Lake, Ont. The Globe and Mail Last updated: Thursday, Aug. 20, 2015 1:22PM EDT

Brody Meekis died of strep throat, a common bacterial infection that is easily cured with a round of antibiotics when diagnosed almost anywhere in the developed world.

But five-year-old Brody was aboriginal and had to rely on the health care provided in his remote Ontario First Nation community.

More than a year has passed since the morning his frantic mother, Wawa Keno, rushed the boy to the nursing station in Sandy Lake, a fly-in reserve 500 kilometres north of Thunder Bay. She still fights back tears as she recounts the final hours in the life of her normally energetic, hockey-loving son.

“I just remember being so angry,” Ms. Keno said during an interview in the living room of her ramshackle, two-bedroom bungalow as she and her family prepared for a feast to mark the anniversary of her son’s death. “I was just in shock.”

Many things went wrong in the treatment of Brody Meekis, many of them related to a shortage of medical resources in the remote indigenous community where, as with other Canadian reserves, the responsibility for health care lies with the federal government. And Brody wasn’t the only First Nations child to die last year of strep. A little girl in Pikangikum, Ont., whose name is being withheld by her community, also succumbed to the disease that is rarely fatal anywhere else in Canada.

When Brody died, I thought, ‘Oh my God, people actually die from [strep throat]?’

Dr. Michael Wilson, regional supervising coroner for Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario

Report after report has outlined the inadequacies of health-care delivery on reserves – where life expectancy is five to seven years shorter than that of the general population, where babies are more likely to die at birth, and where the rates of tuberculosis, diabetes, traumatic injury, infectious disease and suicide are statistically high.

One of those reports was released earlier this year by the federal Auditor-General. It found, among other things, that just one in 45 nurses working at a sample group of on-reserve nursing stations had completed all of the government’s mandatory training courses; that nurses are being asked to do jobs they are not authorized to do; that the stations had numerous health and safety deficiencies; and that Health Canada does not know whether individual reserve facilities are capable of providing essential services.

Several of those issues seem to have been at play when Brody Meekis fell ill.

His father, Fraser Meekis, and Ms. Keno have five surviving children – three boys in primary school and two girls still in diapers. Just as the reserve school began a break

week in the spring of last year, all of the Meekis boys came home with fevers and sore throats.

Mr. Meekis took his ailing children to the nursing station, but the nurse did not take throat swabs, he said. She instead advised him to give the boys Tylenol, to rub their chests with Vicks VapoRub, and to come back for a second appointment the following week.



Brody's mother Wawa Keno, grandmother Adelaide and father Fraser Meekis, holding Makenna, were told to treat the sick boy with Advil and Tylenol.

Sandy Lake has just one medical vehicle to ferry people to and from the facility. It is a van that sometimes breaks down on the rough dirt roads of the reserve and is often diverted by emergencies. It didn't arrive on time to get the kids to the follow-up visit and the family doesn't own a car. So they missed the second appointment.

While the other boys gradually improved, Brody did not. Mr. Meekis said he called to schedule another trip to the nursing station, but was told there were no available appointments for at least a week.

"They said we can call back if things got worse," he said. "I hung up thinking things were going to be okay because they talked me into it. I just had to keep giving the Tylenol every four hours, with Advil, giving him lots to drink and rest."

But none of that helped Brody. A couple of days later, he woke up his brother Zachary early in the morning to tell him to fetch their father because he was feeling sick. Mr. Meekis took one look at his son and decided he needed to be seen by a nurse immediately. He roused Ms. Keno, who ran to her grandmother's house to call for the medical vehicle. When it arrived an hour later, she and Brody took off for the nursing station while Mr. Meekis stayed behind with the other children.

We're not asking for more than what the normal Canadian gets for health care... we're losing people needlessly

Bart Meekis, the Sandy Lake chief

At the station, an aging facility where the vinyl chairs in the waiting room are frayed down to the foam, Ms. Keno said she found student nurses who were skeptical about the severity of Brody's illness. "They said he didn't even look sick," she said.

It wasn't until the head nurse turned up a short while later that the medical staff acknowledged there was a real problem, Ms. Keno said. Brody was given oxygen. And because he kept asking for his father, Mr. Meekis was called to the nursing station. He arrived to find Brody ashen and barely responsive.

"It was a student nurse who was watching my son there," Mr. Meekis said. "I kept asking, 'How come he looks like that?' And the nurse was like, 'I don't know.' And the next thing you know, I saw foam coming out of his mouth and I said, 'He's not breathing!' The nurse panicked. I ran out of the room and said 'emergency, emergency.'"

But it was too late: Although the nurses managed to revive Brody once, he died later that morning.



Fraser Meekis gathers posters and a sign made by Brody's classmates.

The problems at the Sandy Lake nursing station are well known to the community. Council members say the facility was constructed for a reserve of 500 people that is now home to nearly 3,000. Local residents have been trained to perform duties that would normally be done by medical professionals.

"So you could have your janitor taking X-rays – when he's available," said John McKay, a councillor who was once in charge of medical administration.

Staff retention is also a major issue. The Health Canada allocation of 9.5 full-time nurses has rarely been filled. Locals who go into nursing find that their degree or diploma is their ticket out of Sandy Lake, and nurses who come from big cities get bored by the isolation and don't stay long.

The nurses complain that they are working 24 hours a day, said Sandy Lake Chief Bart Meekis. (Meekis is a common name in Sandy Lake.)

“We are very short-staffed, and when you are short-staffed you tend to cut corners and my people end up not getting the services that they should have,” the chief said. “I don’t blame the nurses. They are not able to cope with the amount of people who come to the nursing station. But every case is an emergency for somebody. In Brody’s case, he died. That shouldn’t happen anywhere.”



Brody Meekis was taken to the Sandy Lake nursing station twice, but his strep throat infection was not diagnosed.

When asked by The Globe and Mail to outline what steps it is taking to improve the quality of health care on reserves, Health Canada spokesmen said the department provides mandatory training, access to primary-care physicians and nurse practitioners either on site or by phone or videoconference, and practice tools for nurses.

They also pointed to financial contributions – Canada invests more than \$2.5-billion every year to support the health of First Nations living on-reserve – and said the department “remains committed to providing health services in the communities in partnership with the province.”

In internal documents, however, Health Canada bureaucrats admit there are staff shortages at nursing stations across the country. The department set a performance target last year of reducing the vacancy rate for nurses within the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch from 39 per cent to 30 per cent.

The department’s corporate risk profile for 2014-15 says there is a “very high” risk that the government will not be able to deliver high-quality health services to First Nations and Inuit people.

And a 2010 Health Canada audit of primary health care at reserve nursing stations found that the department was not adequately measuring how well aboriginal people were being served. It pointed out that the nursing stations were operating around the clock, seven

days a week, but the government had budgeted for service only from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Monday to Friday.



Fraser Meekis and Wawa Keno have five surviving children, three boys in primary school and two girls still in diapers, including Makenna.

The sudden death of Brody Meekis sent the community of Sandy Lake into mourning. His brothers, Ms. Keno said, were especially traumatized. They now believe they can be killed by a common cold.

Although it is required by law for a coroner to attend the scene when a child dies, that rarely happens in remote native communities. Brody's body was instead sent to Kenora, Ont., for an autopsy.

Michael Wilson, the regional supervising coroner for Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario, said the post-mortem determined that boy's heart gave out after the streptococcal infection caused it to beat out of control. That is very rare and "it's mostly in the developing world, in Third World conditions," Dr. Wilson said. "Certainly from my work in emergency medicine in my prior career, I saw plenty of strep throats, I gave plenty of prescriptions for penicillin, I certainly saw no one die. When Brody died, I thought, 'oh my God, people actually die from it?' It took me aback."

Dr. Wilson said he has had significant correspondence with Health Canada about Brody's death and that of the girl in Pikangikum and has made recommendations for improvement. He did not provide details about those recommendations but said he believes Health Canada has taken them seriously.



Fraser Meekis hold daughter Makenna while his mother, Adelaide, looks on. On First Nations reserves, life expectancy is five to seven years shorter than that of the general population, studies show.

In February, the department issued its own brief report into the deaths of Brody and the girl. It recommended better community engagement, strengthening gaps in core health programs, and improving the availability of health-care tools in native communities.

But it did not deal with any of the specifics of what killed the two children. It lacked clinical reviews to shed light on what happened in that nursing station in Sandy Lake, and it was written in such bureaucratic language that Brody's father, Fraser Meekis, said it was unreadable.

The report was so bereft of specifics that Alvin Fiddler, the Deputy Grand Chief of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, which represents Sandy Lake and 48 other First Nation communities, wrote to Valerie Gideon, an assistant deputy minister at Health Canada, to complain.

"Health Canada's failure to include full and detailed information is of great concern, as it makes it impossible to assess the quality of the information gathered and the resulting recommendations," Mr. Fiddler wrote. "Health Canada's process has excluded the parents, extended family, and community leadership. It has failed to provide full and detailed information, which speaks to a lack of transparency and accountability."

The day before The Globe visited Sandy Lake, the department issued an edict to the staff at the nursing station, saying they were not permitted to speak to the media, nor were they to allow pictures to be taken inside the facility.



Wawa Keno and her mother-in-law Adelaide Meekis look at posters and signs made for her son Brody.

But the people of Sandy Lake are more than willing to talk about the quality of their health care. The family of 40-year-old Wesley Kakegamic, for instance, is still fighting to understand how he died of a heart attack in March despite seeking help at the nursing station two days earlier.

David Kakegamic, his brother, said Wesley went to the nursing station on March 8 and then again the next day. “He was told that it wasn’t an emergency,” Mr. Kakegamic said. The nurses also said bad weather was preventing them from medevacking David to a large hospital down south that could properly treat him, he said.

“He was sent back home with a couple of Tylenol and Advil and he was told to rub Vicks VapoRub on his chest,” Mr. Kakegamic said.

Wesley Kakegamic died on March 10. He had been a drug user and his family believes that was a factor in the lack of treatment he received. They are angry at the nurses. But the leaders of the community stress they do not believe the nurses are to blame.

“It is the health system that we know today that is failing the First Nations,” said Bart Meekis, the Sandy Lake chief. “We’re not asking for more than what the normal Canadian gets for health care,” he said. But “we’re losing people needlessly.” Brody Meekis, he said, was one of them.

“I want you to know that this is not about pointing fault at one person to help ease the pain that I feel,” said Fraser Meekis of his decision to go public with Brody’s story, “but to let you know that the system failed my son.”

Direct Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/first-nations-health-care-the-system-failed-myson/article26020926/>

Aboriginal History

Cree Code Talkers: Documentary Explores Role of Canada's Unsung WWII Heroes

[ICTMN Staff](#)

8/14/15

Code talkers in the United States have been storied, honored and lauded for their military contributions. But much less known, and barely recognized for their service by the Canadian government, were Cree code talkers from Canada who assisted the Allies in World War II.

A documentary is in the works that would tell their story and explore the power of language through the lens of one such warrior, Charles “Checker” Tomkins, a Cree soldier from Grouard, Alberta, Canada. He enlisted to escape the Great Depression but ended up with a career in the military, serving 25 years with the Sherbrooke Fusilier Regiment, the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps and the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry, according to the [South Peace News](#).

During World War II, the Métis soldier was stationed in Britain and was one of hundreds called upon to use his Cree language—he grew up hearing it from his grandparents on the Pine Acres Reserve in Saskatchewan, according to the *South Peace News*—to befuddle the Germans.

He was successful; the *South Peace News*, quoting an interview that Tomkins gave in May 2003 in Calgary, Canada to curators of the Smithsonian Institution’s [American Indian Code Talkers Traveling Exhibition](#), said he received six medals. But none of them were for his work as a code talker.

In Canada, the code talkers were never officially recognized or commended, partly because their work was considered so covert that they were sworn to secrecy even long after the war was over. The program was not declassified until 1963, according to the [Edmonton Journal](#), but even then most did not speak of their work. And now they have entirely died out. Tomkins died in August 2003 at age 85, but not before beginning to talk a little about his experiences with family members. And that led one of them, a documentary filmmaker, to make a 10-minute film about Tomkins’s life and service, [Cree Code Talker](#).

"This kind of sacrifice and this kind of use of our language, I thought that more people need to know about this," documentary producer Alex Lazarowich, Tomkins’s niece, told [CBC News](#). "Everyone knows the Navajo story, but we had our own guys in our own backyard who were doing this. Cree from Alberta and Cree from Saskatchewan."

The [National Screen Institute of Canada](#) (NSI) is funding the documentary, which Lazarowich and director Cowboy Smithx plan to release in 2016. The project was given a boost in April, when it won first place at the [2015 Hot Docs BravoFactual Short Film](#)

[Pitch](#) competition, which came with \$30,000. The documentary will air on the NSI site and the Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN).

“I think it’s important to highlight the Cree language and the role it played in winning the war,” Lazarowich told the *Edmonton Journal*. “I’m Cree myself, and I think that [the documentary] will be a great way to inspire youth to learn more about their heritage and language, and be proud of it.”

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/08/14/unsung-heroes-cree-code-talkers-who-served-canadian-military-during-wwii-161404>

Our History: A canoe that bridged two cultures

Sanford Osler / .

August 16, 2015 06:52 AM



Bill Reid's 50-foot ocean-going dugout, Lootaas, carries the Olympic torch near Haida Gwaii in November 2009. Photograph By Heather Ramsay

Following the arrival of Europeans on the Northwest Coast, the ancient First Nations arts of canoe design and navigation quickly went into decline, and for decades were nearly lost. In the excerpt below, B.C. canoe historian Sanford Osler traces the re-emergence of indigenous canoe traditions over the past 30 years, including Haida artist Bill Reid’s construction of the magnificent Lootaas in 1986.

Prior to contact with Europeans, Northwest Coast culture was one of the most complex native cultures on the continent, if not the world. Much of this sophistication was due to the resources in the region, particularly the western red cedar and the Pacific salmon. The

traditional West Coast dugout canoe, carved from a single cedar tree, was probably the most important aspect of Northwest Coast culture.

These canoes were used for a variety of purposes, including harvesting seals, whales and fish; transporting people and goods; and waging war. They operated on rivers, inland seas and the open ocean. They ranged from short, single-person craft to ones more than 60 feet long that could carry dozens of people. They were essential and integral to the economic, cultural and spiritual life of these communities.

Every coastal First Nations group designed and built dugout canoes based on available resources and suited to their purposes and environment. The biggest canoe makers were likely the Haida nation. They had the greatest need, being island people, and the best trees.

Particularly awe-inspiring are the Haida ocean-going war canoes. Generally ranging from 35 to 65 feet in length, these majestic canoes were used to travel the more than 80 treacherous kilometres separating Haida Gwaii from the mainland, as well as along the coast.

Beautiful craft, particularly when finished with artwork, they also had some advanced design features. They were incredibly buoyant — so much so that they needed ballast for stability if not fully loaded. The long and high pieces at the bow and stern allowed for a smoother ride in big waves.

The vertical cutwater under the prow threw off high waves when going upwind and kept the canoe going straight, rather than twisting, when going downwind with a following sea. Hilary Stewart, in tracing the uses of western red cedar, wrote: “Nowhere else in the world was a dugout canoe developed to such a degree of sophistication; no other people had a dugout that could match the speed, capacity and seaworthiness — or the elegant grace — of the sleek canoes of the Northwest Coast Indian.”

The first Europeans to reach the Northwest Coast did so by sea in the latter part of the 18th century and were impressed with both the quality and quantity of dugout canoes that greeted them. An officer of the Spanish ship *Sutil* in 1792 reported that the First Nations-built canoes were “so exactly proportioned that they are extremely light and strong and very well shaped. Men and women alike manage these canoes well in the sea.”

Capt. Thomas Barnett recorded that 600 Haida canoes surrounded his trading ship in Haida Gwaii in 1791. Indeed, there were thought to be enough canoes on the coast at that time to hold the entire estimated population of as many as 100,000 people, along with many of their worldly goods.

At first, the canoes flourished after Europeans arrived. The large demand for sea otters was met by the First Nations operating from their dugout canoes. When overharvesting led to the sea otters’ near-extinction, the demand shifted to fur seals, also hunted from canoes.

The tide began to turn in the 19th century. Smallpox and other European-introduced diseases decimated the native population, while the missionaries and government agents sought to destroy native culture and traditions.

The potlatch, a gift-giving festival that depended heavily upon dugout canoes, was banned in 1884. Residential schools, designed to assimilate native children into mainstream culture, were introduced in the 1870s. These changes, along with the decline and eventual closing of fur sealing, led to a sharp reduction in the need for new dugouts.

The making of oceangoing dugout canoes essentially stopped for much of the 20th century. The last great Haida war canoe was a 56-foot vessel, built in 1908, which now rests in the Canadian Museum of History.

Kirk Wipper understood the historical significance of Northwest Coast canoes and wanted one for his fledgling [Canadian] canoe museum. He learned that Victor Adams, a Haida carver living at the once-great canoe-making centre of Masset, on Haida Gwaii, would be willing to build one.

It took Adams three years to rediscover and apply traditional canoe-making techniques. He wrote to Wipper at one point: “We haven’t done this for so long that it’s hard to know whether we’re doing it right.” Launched amid much local interest in 1971, the 26-foot Eagle eventually made its way to Camp Kandalore with James Raffan at the helm. No more canoes were built at Masset that century.

The man who did succeed in resurrecting the art of building large ocean-going canoes on the Northwest Coast was Bill Reid. Born in 1920 to a Haida mother and a father of Scottish-German descent, Reid learned of his native heritage only in his 20s; his mother’s residential schooling had led her to be ashamed of and suppress her background.

A talented artist and communicator, Reid began designing and making First Nations-inspired jewelry and then large cedar totem poles. It was the canoe that really captured his attention.

He believed that West Coast native art starts with that craft: “The Haida canoe is as beautifully designed and decorated an open boat as the world has ever seen.”

Building a big ocean-going canoe for the first time in almost a century was no easy task. Researching the project involved studying the dozens of incomplete canoes in the Haida Gwaii forest, casualties of the smallpox-induced population collapse, as well as the few remaining finished ones.

Reid built two prototypes; the larger, 24-foot canoe is now on display at the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia. The final 50-foot canoe, called Lootaas or “wave eater” in the Haida language, was launched in Skidegate on Haida Gwaii in time for a triumphant entrance at the opening of Vancouver’s Expo ’86.

As spectacular as its role was in Vancouver, Lootaas's most important trip was its voyage to Haida Gwaii in 1987. During this 19-day trip, Lootaas stopped at many communities that hadn't seen such a canoe in most people's memories.

The coastal First Nations relearned receiving protocols, held celebratory feasts and rekindled pride in their canoe heritage. Haida paddler Andy Wilson reminisced about the historic 1987 journey:

"Thanks to Bill [Reid], we ... not just the Haida people, but the people up and down the coast, were able to reconnect because they had to learn their songs and their dances to welcome the Haida into their big houses. So it wasn't just one group of people reconnecting with their past, but it was a whole coast. So it was a pretty spectacular time for us ... And Bill was that vital, important connection for us in the present to our ancestors in the past."

Lootaas's next big trip was to France in 1989, where it was paddled 900 kilometres up the Seine River and made a dramatic entrance into Paris. Noted French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss had classified the art of the Northwest Coast among the five great artistic traditions of human history.

Reid wanted to show the coastal canoe as part of a living Haida culture in one of the great art centres of the world. After a welcome by Jacques Chirac, then the mayor of Paris, Lootaas was carefully manoeuvred into the Musée de l'Homme to join a special exhibition in honour of Lévi-Strauss.

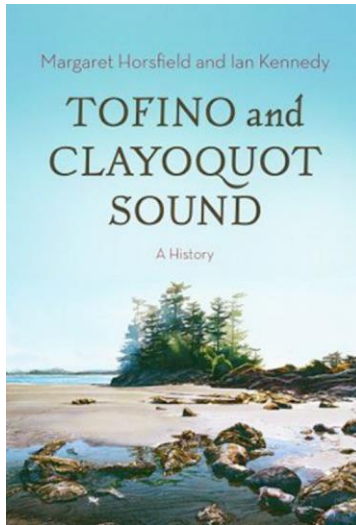
Lootaas completed the circle with its creator when it transported Bill Reid's remains to his ancestral birthplace in Haida Gwaii after his death in 1998. This seemed a fitting end for someone who had said that he got "more satisfaction out of the building of [Lootaas] than of anything I've ever done." Indeed, Lootaas was a metaphor for Bill Reid's recognition and reclamation of what it meant to be Haida.

Excerpted from *Canoe Crossings: Understanding the Craft That Helped Shape British Columbia*. Copyright Sanford Osler, 2014, Heritage House Publishing

See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/life/islander/our-history-a-canoe-that-bridged-two-cultures-1.2031976#sthash.h9Qd9hN6.dpuf>

History of Tofino and area a remarkable achievement

[Dave Obee](#) / Times Colonist
August 16, 2015 05:28 AM



Tofino and Clayoquot Sound: A History; by Margaret Horsfield and Ian Kennedy; Harbour; 622 pp., \$36.95
Photograph By Submitted

Tofino and Clayoquot Sound: A History

By Margaret Horsfield and Ian Kennedy

Harbour, 622 pp., \$36.95

Tofino has become one of the most popular destinations for tourists, from near and far, along our coast. They are drawn by the raw beauty, the closeness to nature and the climate, among other reasons.

Yet most visitors will have no idea about the rich history of the community and its surroundings.

This book would change that, if only we could convince all of those people to carry home a book as thick as this.

Let's look at this in another way. Local history books come in all shapes and sizes and quality can vary widely. This is especially true when the authors try to be as comprehensive as possible, giving fair treatment to the many twists and turns in the life of a community.

In that regard, this book by Margaret Horsfield and Ian Kennedy sets the gold standard.

Tofino and Clayoquot Sound: A History is a remarkable achievement, offering many comprehensive stories about the area. Oh, and it is highly readable, as well. The quality of the research and the quality of the writing help to push this book into the top tier of local history works.

It includes several maps, about 100 photographs and a 10-page timeline covering the high points. There is something here for everyone.

The authors set the stage in the first chapter, offering us the basic geology of the area. This history begins 200 million years ago, more or less.

Clayoquot Sound is home to three Nuu-Chah-Nulth First Nations, the Hesquiaht, Ahousaht and Tla-o-qui-aht. The book describes how these people lived before and after contact with new arrivals from Europe, and deals with the establishment of reserve lands and residential schools.

From there, Horsfeld and Kennedy take us on a fascinating journey through time, dealing with the arrival of traders desperate for seal otter pelts, and much later the development of the industries based on the ocean's rich resources.

The Second World War had a huge impact on the community, with the establishment of an air-force base.

Some of the history included in these pages is quite recent. Road access between Port Alberni and Tofino is one example; the gravel road was opened to the public in 1964, and paving was completed in 1972. That highway helped bring more and more people, and the community was well on its way to becoming the destination of today.

Pacific Rim National Park was established. Hippies arrived. The prime minister surfed at Long Beach. Logging in the area meant jobs, but also conflict.

The War in the Woods, a fight over the trees of Clayoquot, resulted in the largest mass arrest in Canadian history, with grandmothers being taken away in handcuffs.

One thought that emerges in reading this book is that while we might think of the area in terms of protests, or float planes, or beaches, or First Nations, or so on, it is much, much more. The rich history of the Tofino area has many more sides than one might expect.

It's not hard to understand why a book of this size was needed to properly tell all the stories. As works of local history go, this book is a masterpiece.

The reviewer is the editor-in-chief of the Times Colonist.

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/entertainment/books/history-of-tofino-and-area-a-remarkable-achievement-1.2031956#sthash.ApG7NAbM.dpuf>

The Dark Aftermath of the Most Famous First Nations Protest in Canadian History

August 19, 2015

By [Brigitte Noël](#)

This article originally appeared on VICE Canada.

The newspaper clipping has been on the living room wall for decades: a photo of a doe-eyed toddler framed and displayed by proud parents. But Justin Darrow's childhood memento is not a snapshot of a day at the park or of a children's birthday party—it's a souvenir of wartime.

"I'm playing in front of a barricade, a couple cars flipped on top of one another," Darrow explains. "Growing up, it never seemed really that strange: I was a kid, into army stuff and trucks. I had no knowledge of why they were there, and it didn't scare me." It probably should have: Built out of police cars, the barricade's purpose was to keep the army off the reserve and protect residents against erstwhile gunfire.

These are not ancient memories of a foreign conflict: Darrow is now 27 years old, and grew up on a Mohawk reserve one hour north of Montreal.

When the administration of Oka, Quebec, tried to build luxury condos and a golf course on ancestral land long claimed by the residents of Kanesatake, they encountered unyielding opposition from the Mohawk Nation. The ensuing standoff during the summer of 1990 lasted nearly three months and resulted in the death of one police officer and one Mohawk elder.

During the conflict's 78 days, Mohawk warriors squared off against the Canadian army, both sides wielding assault rifles, neither relenting. Roads were blocked, families were separated, and multiple arrests were made. The tensions also spurred egregious displays of racism in neighboring communities, and at one point residents of Châteauguay [burned hanging effigies](#) of Mohawk Warriors.

The standoff ended on September 26, 1990, and has since been considered a victory for Aboriginal people, a watershed moment that inspired First Nations across the country—and the world—to fight for their rights. The groundswell of empowerment has led to an increase in resistance movements, the most recent of which consist of efforts to block pipeline projects (a countrywide battle that has also evoked the possibility of [another Oka Crisis](#)).

Yet for those who took part in the standoff, the "triumph" came at a heavy cost. Many Kanesatake residents subsequently struggled with depression, substance abuse, and suicide. In the years following the events, stories of organized crime, drug trafficking, and police raids kept Kanesatake in the news, a downward spiral difficult to dissociate from that summer's events.

A [2005 research paper](#) on the aftermath of the conflict found that the crisis has had "immeasurable psychological, behavioral, physical, and emotional effects on all community members, including children."

In their findings, Gloria Nelson and Joyce Bonspiel-Nelson said that while causation is difficult to establish, healthcare professionals in Kanesatake witnessed an uptick in "children expressing their feelings in negative ways, such as acting out of violence, abusing alcohol and drugs, contemplating and attempting suicide, self-mutilation, racism, bullying, dropping out of school, post-traumatic stress disorder, and teenage pregnancy."

Darrow, who was two at the time, has few memories of the events and says his family tried to keep its distance from the conflict. Still, he says he's witnessed the community's ongoing struggle with a past many would rather forget. "It's a tough subject, especially for the ones who are older, hard for them to go back and recollect," Darrow says. "It was traumatizing."

Darrow found salvation in skateboarding. The young athlete, who recently competed in the Skateboarding World Cup, is now the [ambassador](#) of an organization that uses the sport to help underprivileged children. But without the sport, he says, he'd be "out doing gang-related stuff, or dead in a ditch."

While the conflict resonated in First Nations communities [across the country](#), perhaps the most closely involved was the Kahnawake Mohawk reserve, located on Montreal's south shore. The community sent its men to Kanesatake as reinforcement, and hosted the warriors who came in from other regions to take part in the resistance movement. In solidarity, Kahnawake residents also blocked access to the Honoré-Mercier Bridge, one of the main arteries connecting Montreal Island to the mainland.

Kahnawake resident Roxann Whitebean was six and a half years old when the tanks started rolling into her community. Now 31, she still has vivid memories of the events, and describes how impressed she had been with the presence of both military and media. "I thought it was awesome," she says. "Then I realized, after a period of time, that we weren't allowed to leave and that people were screaming at us."

Watching the news, she realized the armored vehicles weren't there to protect her and her family. "They were there because we did something wrong. And that was very confusing to me, because usually when I saw the army on TV, they were the good guys, they were the ones saving everyone."

"It was a very confusing time for so many young people."

With food running short, Whitebean and her sister were eventually smuggled out of the community on a boat, leaving behind their grandmother who refused to abandon her home.

Whitebean says that for her and for many of the people she grew up with, the conflict's social impact would reverberate for years. "After 1990, a lot of young people were angry about what happened," she says. "They didn't really understand, and [they] acted out."

"They were uncontrollable and fearless because when you're that young and you're surrounded by the army, you know, it changes your mentality."

In her adult years, Whitebean began working at an elementary school, where she realized how little the younger generation knew about what had happened. "They were so curious, I found out they were discussing it in the schoolyard," she says. "But they thought it was something that took place 200 years ago."

Feeling a need to tell her story, Whitebean catalogued and fictionalized her recollections in a short film, her first, which recently premiered at the [Montreal First Peoples Festival](#). *Legend of the Storm* tells the story of the Oka crisis as seen through the eyes of a child; a perspective Whitebean felt had been neglected. "I made it for our people as a whole so that we can share our stories and show what goes on in the minds of children when they're faced with extreme circumstances," Whitebean explains.

Both Darrow and Whitebean say that, despite the adversity they faced, the generation who grew up during and after the standoff inherited a unique perspective on what it means to be Mohawk, and how important it is to preserve the cultural heritage and the land.

"Our people are very strong, we have healed from many things," says Whitebean, echoing one of her film's most poignant lines. "I think we're moving along quite nicely, considering that the last [residential school] closed in 1996."

In their findings, Nelson and Bonspiel-Nelson say the historical context is important to keep in mind in treating those affected by Oka. "The challenge is to address not only the crisis in front of us but the ones behind us, too, because our children and our young people ahead of us are depending on us to hand down our strength, love and wisdom, not our grief and trauma," they wrote.

For Whitebean, this is a matter of communication. "As Onkwehonwe people, we're able to share our stories more, there's an open communication now whereas before no one came to the reserve, we didn't really like to leave the reserve," she says. "I think that we're opening up and that we're healing."

Preserving the fighting spirit is also part of the healing process, and Kanesatake's leadership [has vowed to block](#) TransCanada's pipeline, which would cross the northern part of its territory. "We stood up for something, we're still standing up for something," Darrow says. "There's so much history here, we don't need catastrophes that would escalate tensions between First Nations and Canada."

"If we were peaceful before, we have to be even more peaceful now."

Direct Link: <http://www.vice.com/read/the-long-shadow-of-the-oka-crisis-on-the-children-who-were-there-827>

Local man searching for remains of First Nations people once buried on Scholten Hill

By Alex Mccuaig on August 18, 2015.



In this photo dated 1935, one of several graves believed to contain the remains of First Nations from the late-1800s to early-1900s can be seen marked off by a wooden fence on Scholten Hill.--Photo courtesy of the Esplanade Archives

A city man is attempting to locate the remains of First Nations dead who were believed buried on Scholten Hill sometime during the late-1800s, early 1900s and disinterred during road construction in the mid-twentieth century.

“I’d like to see them brought back if they’re sitting in boxes,” said Rob Demarais.

“I’d like to see them brought back here.”

In the Nov. 19, 1959 edition of the *News*, the paper reported at least three graves were dug up on the hillside by city work crews.

At the time the city was building what would become City View Road, later renamed Scholten Hill.

The *News* reported the bodies were wrapped in bright blankets with tin cups, a pipe, buttons and an earring also recovered from the site.

In a *News* column four days after the discovery, the paper reported long-time resident Carl Sillak recalled nearly 100 First Nations, either Blackfoot or Cree, living near the current site of Medalta Potteries during the first few years of the twentieth century.

He told the *News* of funeral processions which would march up Scholten Hill with the dead on travois and who were accompanied by First Nations women tying coloured rags or feathers on sage brush and small bushes to ward off evil spirits.

He estimated he believed about 16 individuals were buried at the site.

In the March 18, 1963 edition of the *News*, the paper reported Medicine Hat Police Sgt. Alf Mews had chased some children away who were digging up some of the bones at the site of an old and unmarked Cree cemetery located at the top of City View Road.

A number of the bones were left strewn across the site prior to being collected by officials.

According to documents provided to the *News* from the Esplanade Archives, a number of excavations took place over the 1960s in the area of Scholten Hill following the discoveries, with the largest uncovering the bodies of 11 adults and two children.

It's those 13 bodies, according to documentation, that were taken to Edmonton for study by University of Alberta officials and which Demarais would like to see returned or accounted for.

The remains had been reinterred in Medicine Hat before being dug up again and taken to the University of Alberta for research purposes.

"If they were white people, they would have been brought back and put in the ground here," said Demarais, who was born and partially grew up in the former Metis community of Saratoga Park at the foot of Scholten Hill.

Demarais said he doesn't know if the 13 bodies were reinterred in Edmonton or if they continue to be held by the university.

But he'd like to find out.

"I think it's only right ... I am passionate about it because my ancestors are First Nations," Demarais.

Historical photos from the 1930s provided by the Esplanade Archives document that the burial sites were indeed marked by wooden fences, though, it appears they were no longer standing by the late-1950s, early-1960s.

Direct Link: <http://medicinehatnews.com/news/local-news/2015/08/18/local-man-searching-for-remains-of-first-nations-people-once-buried-on-scholten-hill/>

Aboriginal Identity & Representation

First Nations youth learn survival and cultural practices

[Kelly Running](#) / Carlyle Observer

August 14, 2015 01:04 AM



The last standing survivors, joined by Medwolf their survival instructor (fifth from right), and volunteers for the program stop for in front of the “Land of the Little People” sign made to depict the pathway.

Photo: Kelly Running

Years ago First Nations lived fully dependent on the land. Sometimes a harsh land on the prairies, they learned to survive and found reprieve from the elements in places like the Moose Mountains.

As a way to regain this knowledge a nine week program was held this summer for youth. They spent their time in the wilderness learning about the land in the form of survival as well as learning about cultural practices and legends told around the fire in the evening.

Upon arriving at the camp on Thursday, Aug. 6, the youth came to greet The Observer before showing and explaining a portion of what they learned. They took The Observer on a walk through a pathway with ancient signs and markers to help identify each section of trail called, “Land of the Little People.”

“We made some really great finds,” Medwolf explained. “I’m lucky, I was raised by my grandparents, and I pass on the little bit I know to others. I know this much,” he held up his fingers an inch apart, “from this much,” he said holding his hands apart a few feet.

The little bit Medwolf knows includes 130 medicines as well as legends and ancient signage once used. Though these legends often differ amongst First Nations people many of them focus on the same teachings.

Medwolf teaches through way of doing, so the youth learned over the course of nine weeks by searching and identifying medicines, putting up teepees, creating ancient

signage, and building work areas, as well as learning about legends. This is where the name of their educational pathway the youth built developed, “Land of the Little People.”

Land of the Little People educational pathway created

“All tribes have little people,” Medwolf explained. “Not just First Nations, but other cultures, the Irish have famous ones. The little people are a tribe from the upworlds who were stranded here. When the light skinned people came the little people went into hiding and now they can only be seen by kids and holy people.”

“They gave us knowledge though, like how to take aspirin out of the willow, which rocks won’t blow up in a fire, and the powerful vitamins in dog bones which were used in our casts to fuse broken bones. There are many stories of little people who taught us everything. Today they’re still hiding, but if you make a playground, they’ll come play, or a village, they’ll come visit.”

“Locally they have a place here called Heart Hill which is famous for little people.”

The pathway built includes a small village partway down the path which was used to teach the participants about setting up a village, because even done on a small scale it requires the same practices as on the larger.

With only a few small four foot teepees set up in this Little People Village, there are plans to set up more to make it thirteen.

“Thirteen, to our people, isn’t a bad number,” Medwolf explained. “Thirteen is sacred to us. A perfect hawk’s tail has thirteen feathers.”

The trail began with three rocks stacked, which is an ancient sign indicating that a trail begins. The first stop the youth spoke about included a survival technique of accumulating pure drinking water using a hole, rocks, and in this instance a plastic sheet. Condensation would accrue and pool in the middle.

As one walked along the trail youth explained different scat and tracks found within the area from moose to elk. The youth explained each animal’s tendencies and were able to tell if the moose was a cow or bull simply by the shape of the scat.

They also pointed out a variety of medicines and food, which grows naturally in the Moose Mountains. Some even plucked berries as they walked along, eating them because they knew what they were and could eat them without fear of becoming ill.

In addition to pointing out the various items, the youth also explained what each natural medicine was used for by ancestors showcasing their expanded knowledge from the nine week program.

River willow was used in a tea for aches and pains in the body. The birch tree leaves were used in a tea to shrink kidney stones, while fungus on birch trees was used for a more powerful tea for kidney stones, pain, headaches, and fevers. Chokecherries were gathered and used in pemican, while chokecherry tea was used at feasts and gatherings; wild honey would be added to chokecherries to make a thick cough syrup as well.

Wild rose berries were used in stews due to high vitamin C content and the roots were pounded into powder to create tea to fight scurvy. The powder was also used on open wounds to stop bleeding, while the petals were used to improve evening vision.

Raspberry leaves were made into tea for pregnant women to make childbirth easier, while it could also help with stomach cramps.

These were simply a few of the medicines they learned about.

The most important medicines for prayer are sage, cedar, sweet grass, and tobacco as these create a powerful smudge to help cleanse one's soul, bring in good spirits, keep out bad spirits, and help take prayers to the other side much like an arrow.

One of the youth added humour in explaining sacred tobacco which is “a way to show respect. We take medicines from Mother Earth and return the tobacco as an offering, because Earth doesn't accept credit cards.”

Throughout the trail there were also sites set up with a deadfall trap, ancient signs indicating which way to turn, a flour making station, a clay pot station, an animal hide drying area, the small village, and at the end of the path an ancient sign telling others not to drink the water.

One of the participants spoke about the importance of dogs, which were used as pack animals before horses were brought to North America. Additionally the young boy explained that the first casts for broken bones were developed by First Nations who would use dog bones, from those that had died, mixed with clay to create the cast.

Nine important rules were also learned about what to do if they become lost including staying in one place and not wandering, wearing bright clothing, if unsure about drinking water to drink the morning dew off of vegetation, if amongst a group to stick together, to find a cozy area but not a hiding spot, to not sleep on the ground but to make a bed as the ground is cold, keep clothes dry and wear as many as you can to stay warm, don't eat anything you're unsure about, and to make yourself as big as possible to be seen from a helicopter/search party.

An additional survival technique they also knew was that leaves can be stuffed into clothing to be used as insulation although a resounding answer when asked if it mattered what kind of leaves was simply laughter as the youth stated, “Not stinging nettle [poison ivy].”

An important plant on the prairies

One of the most significant items for survival on the prairies were actually cattails.

“Cattails were very important to our people,” one of the participating youth explained. “Cattail root was ground into flour to make pancakes, biscuits, and bread. The roots could be put in fire and baked, and they tasted like baked potatoes. The stem could be dried and boiled, rolled in salt and butter, and that tasted like corn on the cob.”

“Hunters also used them as duck decoys and they were used to make baskets for picking berries. For children, you could use the cattails to make small dolls.”

“The cattail fluff was used in the deadfall trap. You would tuck it under and around the trap, so it wouldn't freeze to the ground. It was most important to our people.”

Teepees

The youth were also given the opportunity to learn how to set up teepees.

“One of the main things about teepees was that they were owned by women, they put them up; if a man and woman got into a fight the man would have to leave because it was the woman's property,” a participant explained. “These are larger than what they would have been, they used to only be 10 to 12 feet at most. The outsides were made out of buffalo hides, these were tough women, because even the canvas is heavy by itself.”

“It's said that they could withstand tornadoes because they were built to be one with the ground. They all face east because wind rarely comes from that direction here. On the prairies at the base of the teepee rocks were used to keep the hides in place, which is why there are teepee rings found in the prairies, the rocks were left behind because they were too heavy to carry and more could be found where they moved to. People who lived near the trees could use wooden pegs.”

A legend learned

In addition to these practices, youth also learned many legends including how fire was obtained. Coyote saw a woman burying her family, including her baby, after they froze in the night. Coyote knew where to get fire and made a plan to steal fire from the Fire Demons who guarded it. Coyote watched the cycle of guards and found help from a squirrel with a straight tail, a chipmunk with no colour, a frog with a long tail, and the woods.

Coyote stole the fire and ran while the Fire Demons chased him. As they caught up to him, Coyote tossed the fire to the squirrel who ran. The Fire Demons caught

up to the squirrel and as they reached out, the squirrel tossed the fire away but not before the squirrel's tail curled up from the heat off the Fire Demons.

The chipmunk caught the fire from the squirrel and ran as fast as he could. The Fire Demon caught up and as the chipmunk tossed the fire to the frog a Fire Demon clawed the chipmunks back which is why four white lines are now seen on them.

As the frog hopped away from the pursuing Fire Demons, they grabbed him by the tail which is why they no longer have one, and as the frog was caught he tossed the fire to the woods. The woods wouldn't give up the fire despite promises from the Fire Demons.

A successful program

The program led by Medwolf was brought in by the White Bear First Nation through the cooperation of the National Child Benefit Reinvestment program (NCBR), the Lands Department, Health Department, as well as Sports and Recreation.

“A huge thank you too NCBR, Lands Department, Health and Sports Culture and Rec, also to the 2014/15 Chief and Council and a special thanks to the survival instructor for all the knowledge shared and traditions passed on to us all,” Councilor Tanya Littlechief with Sports and Rec stated. “Together we made sure this happened and I couldn't have done it without all of their help and the support of the volunteers.”

See more at: <http://www.carlyleobserver.com/news/local-news/first-nations-youth-learn-survival-and-cultural-practices-1.2028234#sthash.j4hJPBs.dpuf>

Shelter Valley Folk Festival bans aboriginal headdresses as fashion

‘Headdresses have a weight of significance’ says festival board chairwoman



ALDERVILLE -- The Shelter Valley Folk Festival organizers are prohibiting First Nations-style headdresses on non-indigenous people at this year's event.

Northumberland News

By [Todd McEwen](#)

Aug 20, 2015

NORTHUMBERLAND -- The Shelter Valley Folk Festival is joining a growing list of festivals banning aboriginal headdresses -- unless you're entitled to wear it.

Festival organizers are taking a cue from other music festivals, such as England's Glastonbury Festival and Montreal's Osheaga, which have introduced policies prohibiting headdresses because they have a spiritual and cultural meaning to First Nations communities. Festival organizers are asking headdresses not to be used as a fashion accessory.

"We want to be a place that is welcoming and inclusive," said Shelter Valley's board chairwoman Candace Shaw. "We don't want it to be a place where people enter and see their cultures disrespected."

Cultural insensitivity hasn't been an issue in the past at Shelter Valley Folk Festival, but the board felt it fit the festival's mandate to respect all cultures and ways of life.

"It hasn't been a problem," Ms. Shaw said, "but it's a good idea to preemptively put it forward."

Festival organizers took notice after headlines and Twitter erupted during the Winnipeg Folk Festival, when a non-indigenous festivalgoer was spotted wearing an aboriginal headdress.

"We saw other festivals had a policy," Ms. Shaw said. "And having a policy is important to us. It fits with what we're trying to do as an organization."

The Shelter Valley Folk Festival is an event that celebrates music, art, sustainable living and harvest food during Labour Day Weekend at Henkel Family Farm near Grafton. The land the festival uses is historically attached to aboriginal roots and continues to be traditional territory for First Nations communities.

With a policy now in place, festival organizers say anyone caught wearing a First Nations headdress can expect a conversation with a volunteer or organizer. If the offender is not entitled to wear it, they'll be asked to remove it or leave.

"Headdresses have a weight of significance," Ms. Shaw said. "It's different than putting a flower in your hair."

Northumberland County has a significant aboriginal population and the festival has included First Nations performers, Digging Roots, in this year's lineup.

“They are a wonderful band,” Ms. Shaw said. “We try to be a diverse festival. There are some really incredible and wonderful performers in the aboriginal community. We’re so lucky in Canada.”

Advanced tickets are on sale for the festival, which runs from Sept. 4-6 on Henkel Family Farm near Grafton. Tickets can be purchased online at www.sheltervalley.com/tickets or by calling 905-349-2788.

Direct Link: <http://www.northumberlandnews.com/news-story/5805430-shelter-valley-folk-festival-bans-aboriginal-headaddresses-as-fashion/>

Aboriginal Jobs & Labour

Zibi development seeks aboriginal construction workers

Windmill has done "more than anyone else" in region to engage with Algonquin, developer says

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 17, 2015 10:19 AM ET Last Updated: Aug 17, 2015 8:09 PM ET



The massive Windmill redevelopment on the Ottawa River shoreline, which is land considered sacred to First Nations peoples, is seeking aboriginal construction workers.

Windmill Developments and Toronto's Dream Corporation plan to build a \$1.2-billion residential, commercial and retail community on the Chaudière and Albert Islands starting this fall.

The 37-acre site, which includes the downtown Gatineau, Que., riverfront, is also expected to include condominium buildings, a boutique hotel, shops, waterfront parks and a network of pedestrian and cycling paths.

Jeff Westeinde, co-founder of Windmill, told CBC Radio's *Ottawa Morning* he's looking to create a database of available and skilled aboriginal workers for the project, which could begin decontamination work in September or October of this year.

Its partner Decontie Construction Inc. issued a call-out to the Algonquin nation of Kitigan Zibi on Monday to build an inventory of Algonquin-Anishinabe construction workers. Westeinde said he hopes to employ the workers and provide them with the proper qualifications.

Qualification bureaucracy presents barrier

Workers from Kitigan Zibi do not have the proper union certification for Gatineau, which presents a problem.

It is not a new problem, though, said Westeinde. He referenced the James Bay area where Hydro Quebec worked to create a "special administrative zone" to ensure they could hire a crew of Cree workers.



The Zibi development will give the public an easier view of a somewhat hidden gem: Ottawa's Chaudière Falls. (Danny Globerman/CBC)

"We are very hopeful that discussions with the [Quebec construction workers' union] will lead to a fruitful outcome. This is something they're aiming to see as well," he said, adding the union does have a dedicated liaison for aboriginal workers.

While Westeinde said he wants to hire as many Algonquin workers as possible, the number of those either interested, qualified or available is not known. That's why Windmill is not setting any specific target until after the database is put in place.

"Essentially we're building an inventory to say, here's the availability of labour and the types of skill sets and interest they have. We'll be working with both the [union] and the ministry of labour and some of the local colleges ... for those who want training. That'll tell us how many workers are interested," Westeinde said.

Signs to be in Algonquin, English, French

The development has been named "Zibi," the Algonquin word for river, and there will be signs in English, French and Algonquin, according to Westeinde.

Westeinde said the project will be a success if "the French, the English and the First Nations" get along.

"This is private property. We're a private sector developer who has done more, we think, than anyone else in the region to ever engage with the Algonquin, so we're very hopeful that that will get resolved quickly and we can get to work," Westeinde said.

There has been some push back including a lawsuit and a hearing at the Ontario Municipal Board that starts Monday at Ottawa's city hall. The hearing is not expected to move past this stage, Westeinde said.

A First Nation near Golden Lake has formally agreed to work with the developer and Westeinde said other large groups representing Algonquin could soon join.

The entire project is expected to be completed in 2030.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/zibi-development-seeks-aboriginal-construction-workers-1.3193288>

New campus hopes to boost First Nations missionaries

[Jason Kerr](#)

Published on August 17, 2015

Timothy Program International (TPI) has announced plans to start up a new part-time training campus in Prince Albert.



John Fryters, pictured, says Timothy Program International plans to open a part-time campus in Prince Albert. The new campus will focus on training First Nations ministers and missionaries, or people who want to work with First Nations communities.

The North Carolina-based organization specializes in training Christian ministers and missionaries for work in indigenous communities. They currently have over a dozen campuses around the world, based mostly in Peru, Ghana, Uganda, South Sudan, Kenya and Tanzania.

John Fryters, the director of TPI's Canadian office said the new part-time campus will focus on training First Nations, Metis or Inuit people who want to become pastors or missionaries.

Training will also be provided for anyone who wants to work with indigenous peoples, but helping out First Nations individuals is the primary goal.

"We would like to see First Nations pastors being very well trained to operate their own churches for their own people," he said. "I really believe that is important."

The new program includes the variety of subjects like the study of ancient Greek and Hebrew grammar as well as courses in biblical and world history. Most of the students will be First Nations, but TPI wants to hire First Nations faculty too.

Expenses will be low because TPI is providing the course material for free, so Fryters said scholarships would be offered to prospective students.

The course would normally take 14 months to complete, but since the new campus will only accept part-time students it's going to take a little longer.

"We're going to start out once a week for three hours, but that might change," Fryters said. "That might need to be increased."

The TPI program is offered across the world and Fryters said it's been very successful in training people who work with indigenous cultures. He said that's something that's very important, and he wants to see First Nations individuals become strong leaders in their churches and communities.

“From a missions perspective, the time of foreign missionaries come in, that is over. I think the time is there for people to be trained to do the work of the ministry for their own people, to their own end and with their own people.”

Fryters said this approach has been tried in other countries, like Peru, and he’s convinced it could work in Prince Albert and area.

“We’re standing beside them. We help them as much as we can.”

The new campus will operate in Embassy Church on the north part of Central Avenue. The exact date and time of the opening will be announced after November 15.

Direct Link: <http://www.paherald.sk.ca/News/Local/2015-08-17/article-4247827/New-campus-hopes-to-boost-First-Nations-missionaries/1>

Aboriginal Politics

Federal Election 2015: Voting Winds Could Be Shifting In Nunavut

CP | By Bob Weber, The Canadian Press

Posted: 08/14/2015 9:37 am EDT Updated: 08/14/2015 9:59 am EDT



IQALUIT, Nunavut — If the recent past is a guide, Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq, the Conservative incumbent for the vast riding of Nunavut, shouldn't have to worry about the Oct. 19 election.

In 2011, she took 50 per cent of the vote over three rivals, winning 51 of 59 of the eastern Arctic's polls.

Since then, she can point to a number of accomplishments, including hundreds of millions of federal dollars for much-needed housing and favourable treatment for Inuit organizations seeking federal infrastructure money.

The territorial government's request for greater borrowing powers was granted. The North now has its own economic development agency, spreading federal dollars throughout the region.

Aglukkaq is a voice from the Arctic around the cabinet table where the big decisions are made.

And yet, some have doubts.

"I know that there's a lot of disappointment with our current MP," said Madeleine Redfern, former mayor of Iqaluit and now head of the Ajungi Group consultancy. "There's a lot more negative feelings toward the Harper government."

Pleasing Inuit elites in the territorial government and land-claim organizations doesn't necessarily produce popular support, said Jim Bell, longtime editor of the Iqaluit-based Nunatsiaq News.

"If you are an office-holder or political leader in Nunavut, you're probably going to be at least mildly satisfied. (But) Inuit corporations are not necessarily in touch with the grassroots."

Ottawa's program to subsidize Nunavut's notoriously high grocery costs is widely disliked, said Bell.

"Whether it's fair or unfair, everyone in Nunavut who is unhappy about food prices is also unhappy with Leona."

Aglukkaq also faces backlash over her perceived failure to back a wide coalition of Nunavut mayors, hunters, trappers and Inuit wildlife regulators opposed to seismic testing off the coast of Baffin Island. She must deal with a growing sense that she represents Ottawa to the people of Nunavut, instead of the other way around, said Redfern.

The minister recently came through with an long-awaited announcement on a deep-water port for Iqaluit and money has been available for small, short-term projects such as community playgrounds. But other projects — harbour facilities in the rest of Nunavut's communities, a road into the central region, better broadband access — have gone nowhere.

"A lot of these announcements are based on Ottawa's priorities, not on our communities," Redfern said.

Liberal candidate Hunter Tootoo may take her task on that. A former member of the territorial legislature, Tootoo was most recently head of the Nunavut Planning Commission, a group that has opposed Ottawa's pro-development agenda.

The New Democrats had yet to nominate a candidate in the early days of the campaign after Jerry Natanine, mayor of Clyde River, withdrew his bid.

Still, an incumbent has an edge in this far-flung riding where votes are decided more on the candidate than party platforms or leadership debates. Aglukkaq has visited most of the riding's communities — no small feat in a constituency spread over three time zones.

"It took me three years to get to every community," said Nancy Karetak-Lindell, who held the seat for the Liberals before Aglukkaq won. "Getting people that are well known in their community or region to endorse you was a way to get known. That still works today."

Personal loyalties count, said Bell, but Nunavut politics increasingly resembles that in the rest of Canada, with dividing lines between left and right playing out through issues such as development and social spending.

And social media are helping shorten some of the distances, said Karetak-Lindell.

Still, she said, it's the candidate that matters in the North.

"This is why I come down again to personally getting to know people. I think that's a key factor in our territory."

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/08/14/voting-winds-be-shift-in-nunavut-where-character-counts_n_7986578.html

First Nations need a better partner in Ottawa: Editorial

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau's promise of new funding for First Nations schooling can be seen as a moral down payment on a better, forward-looking relationship.



Assembly of First Nations national Chief Perry Bellegarde rightly observed that "Canadians want their political leaders to do the right thing."

Published on Sun Aug 16 2015

When Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized back in 2008 for the “great harm” inflicted on First Nations over the years, Canada’s 1.4 million aboriginal people had reason to hope that a better day was dawning. But sadly, relations soured and anger began building until it boiled over on Parliament Hill in the form of the Idle No More protest movement.

First Nations expect better from the Crown, beginning with a genuinely willing partner in the federal government. They haven’t had one on Harper’s long watch. Ottawa has been slow to recognize Crown obligations and native treaty rights, and to develop a respectful relationship, even as aboriginal communities continued to struggle with marginalization, joblessness, youth suicide, a legacy of [residential school abuse](#), underfunded education, poor health, substandard housing and unsafe drinking water.

Would a change of government in the Oct. 19 election help? Certainly, it couldn’t hurt. One of Harper’s first acts was to kill the former Liberal government’s \$5-billion Kelowna Accord that was intended to boost living standards on reserves. Then relations sank to the point where native leaders rejected a federal proposal to invest \$1.9 billion in native education, because of the strings attached to it.

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau’s [campaign promise](#) this past week of a new and much-needed \$2.6 billion funding package for core education and \$500 million for school infrastructure can be seen as a moral down payment on a better, forward-looking relationship. He also promises respectful nation-to-nation talks to revive the broader Kelowna deal, adapted to current needs.

Indeed, both of Harper’s chief rivals seem genuinely determined to reboot the broken relationship with First Nations and to invest in the next generation. It’s a worthy goal, as Canada looks to celebrating 150 years of Confederation in 2017.

As National Chief Perry Bellegarde rightly observed at the Assembly of First Nations meeting last month, “Canadians want their political leaders to do the right thing.” He urged the federal parties to come forward with plans. And he urged his peoples to vote.

[Speaking to the summit](#), both New Democrat Leader Thomas Mulcair and Trudeau pledged to invest more respect, energy and hard cash in the relationship. Significantly, Harper and his ministers didn’t attend.

Mulcair vowed to create a cabinet-level panel chaired by the prime minister to ensure that future federal decisions will honour Ottawa’s responsibilities toward aboriginal people. Like Trudeau, he promised to step up education funding. And he’d toughen up environmental assessments for resource development.

Trudeau promised annual meetings between the prime minister and aboriginal leaders. He pledged to respect aboriginal constitutional rights. And he would lift Ottawa's decades-old 2-per-cent cap on funding to improve not only education but also housing and health.

Both promised an inquiry into missing and murdered women.

The Conservatives, too, have pledged money for community building, schooling, skills development and other services. But they are hobbled by their record of unilateral action and broken trust.

No one underestimates the challenges of honouring complex treaty rights, negotiating land claims, negotiating resource development and making the best use of the \$8 billion that Ottawa spends on aboriginal affairs and northern development.

But Canada's native leaders have made it clear they expect the next federal government to acknowledge a minimum "duty to consult" before reneging on commitments like the Kelowna Accord or passing laws affecting their treaty rights or inherent rights. They want a healthier fiscal relationship that would see more federal money for native jobs and infrastructure. And they are pressing for a greater share of resource royalties.

Like all other Canadians, they deserve a government that will give them a hearing.

Direct Link: <http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorials/2015/08/16/first-nations-need-a-better-partner-in-ottawa-editorial.html>

Main federal parties and their aboriginal platforms

[*Canada Politics*](#) – 22 hours ago



Tina Fontaine: 1 year since her death, has anything changed?

By June Chua

It has been a year since the body of 15-year-old Tina Fontaine was pulled from Winnipeg's Red River. Last summer, lead investigator Sgt. John O'Donovan said she had "definitely been exploited and taken advantage of."

The discovery of the aboriginal girl's body, which was found wrapped in plastic, marked a tipping point, according to Leslie Spillett, an indigenous advocate and director of Ka Ni Kanichihk in Winnipeg, which provides educational, health and job services to aboriginal people.

Spillett says the teen's death made a deep impact in the consciousness of the Canadian public where "this is now an issue that doesn't seem to be going away."

According to an [RCMP report released in June](#), 1,181 women and girls identified as indigenous were murdered between 1980 and 2012 with another 174 missing. It's a homicide rate 4.5 times higher than that of all other women in the country.

The issue of missing and murdered aboriginal women became a clarion call around the country triggering massive protests that sometimes blocked major arteries in cities and towns and calls for a nationwide investigation.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has refused to launch an inquiry and only a few months ago, Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt caused an uproar by proclaiming he knows who is killing aboriginal women — aboriginal men.

The focus on missing and murdered aboriginal women has also cast a hard light on other aboriginal issues such as governance, land management, housing and schools and the horrific abuses exposed by the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission \(TRC\)](#).

The TRC collected 1,355 hours of testimony and 6,740 statements over a six-year period concerning the abuse aboriginal children endured at residential schools. This resulted in 94 recommendations.

Here's a look at the major political parties and their positions on aboriginal issues:

Bloc Québécois:

- The Bloc didn't immediately respond for comment. But following the TRC report the party issued a statement saying it has always recognized Canada's Aboriginal Peoples as a "distinct peoples," and that the federal government should support the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as develop and implement a plan or education funding strategy for First Nations as proposed in Bill C-599 by the Bloc in 2010.

Conservative Party of Canada:

- \$500 million for building and renovating schools on reserves.

- review the TRC's 94 recommendations.
- \$567 million over a five-year period for "stronger communities."
- \$215 million towards skills development and training for aboriginal peoples; \$200 million to improve First Nations education.
- \$30.3 million to expand a plan that helps communities formulate their own land management laws to enhance economic development on reserve lands.

Green Party of Canada:

- adopt the TRC's recommendations.
- a national inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women.
- amend laws so indigenous approval of natural resource projects have the same weight as federal government approval.
- adopt the the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- work with aboriginal groups to make an Aboriginal Lands and Treaties Tribunal Act that deals with land claims, negotiations, etc.
- review all existing federal policies on self-government.
- execute the recommendations of the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.
- remove the 2 per cent funding cap on First Nation education and fully fund the program backlog (\$424 million).
- lands claims agreements already negotiated and that may have halted due to lack of funding should be implemented right away.
- legislate primary hunting, trapping, fishing and logging rights for Aboriginal Peoples on traditional lands.
- work to scrap the Indian Act if First Nations decide that's what they want.

Liberal Party of Canada:

- a national inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women.
- implementation of all TRC recommendations.
- pass legislation in consultation with First Nations people on implementing the reforms for more transparency and accountability on reserves.
- an extra \$515 million a year for core education in First Nations schools (kindergarten to Grade 12) for a total of \$2.6 billion in new funding over four years.
- \$500 million for education infrastructure.
- additional \$50 million per year for post-secondary student support.
- a full review of legislation unilaterally imposed on indigenous peoples by the Harper government.
- renew funding to support and enhance indigenous languages.
- ensure that First Nations have control over First Nations education.
- equitable funding for child and family services on reserves.

New Democratic Party:

- national inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women.
- act on the recommendations from the TRC report within 100 days of assuming office.
- set up a cabinet committee, chaired by the prime minister, to ensure federal government decisions respect treaty rights.
- revitalize the environmental assessment process and work to protect lakes and rivers.
- deal with unresolved land claims.
- improve educational outcomes, reduce poverty and increase opportunities.
- all new legislation should abide by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- improvements to essential physical infrastructure i.e. roads, housing and drinking water.

Direct Link: <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/blogs/canada-politics/main-federal-parties-and-their-aboriginal-192744810.html>

Brenda Sayers, Green candidate on Vancouver Island

[Investigates](#) | August 17, 2015 by [Todd Lamirande](#) |



We're back with the Green Party for today's Aboriginal candidate profile. This time we'll focus on [Brenda Sayers](#), who is running in the newly created riding of [North Island-Powell River](#). She will be up against [Laura Smith](#) of the Conservatives, [Rachel Blaney](#) for the NDP, and [Peter Schwarzhoff](#) of the Liberals.

According to Sayers's [bio](#), she was a Financial Administrator of the Haahuupayak School located on the Tseshaht First Nation near Port Alberni, BC. She sat on the BC Transit board for six years and is currently serving on the Crime Stoppers Board.

Sayers was also a chief organizer of the Hupacasath First Nations' court challenge of the federal government's Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA) with China.



“The really important thing here for First Nations to realize is that Canada’s obligation to First Nations rights and title are not recognized under international law. If China were to bring a claim against Canada, there would be nothing to protect rights and title,” she told the [Vancouver Observer over a year ago](#).

However, the Hupacasath’s legal challenge was struck down in the Federal Court of Appeals last year. And the First Nation decided not to pursue it in the Supreme Court of Canada. “Hupacasath’s legal team advised us we wouldn’t have a strong enough case for SCC to accept because it had been ratified (by the feds last September),” she said to *APTN Investigates*.

Sayers was introduced as the Green Party candidate on July 31st. “Every first nations and Canadian has a powerful reason to vote in this upcoming election,” she said in [an interview with a local news outlet](#). “Climate change should be at the forefront of everybody’s minds in this election.”

So what are Sayers’s chances? The riding she is running in was carved out of Vancouver Island North, which was narrowly won by former Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan—he is running in neighbouring Courtney-Alberni, and West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky County. Redistributed votes from the 2011 election would give the Conservatives a narrow lead. Last month Green Party leader, Elizabeth May, declared there was no way a Conservative will win and that it will be either an NDP or Green to represent the riding.

But the [threehundredeight.com](#) gives the NDP a 91% chance of winning, with the Green Party polling at about 8%. The riding is one of the 51 identified by the Assembly of First Nations as one with a high enough Indigenous population to be an influence in the outcome.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/08/17/brenda-sayers-green-candidate-on-vancouver-island/>

Sandra Arias officially nominated for NDP

By [James Wood](#), Lloydminster Meridian Booster

Tuesday, August 18, 2015 1:53:22 MDT PM



NDP candidate Sandra Arias pauses while delivering a speech to gathered party members during her nomination meeting in North Battleford on August 15, 2015. Photo by James Wood Meridian Booster

The newly-nominated NDP candidate for Battlefords-Lloydminster isn't pulling any punches in laying out her plans for the 2015 election.

Former Red Pheasant Cree Nation Band Councilor Sandra Arias was officially voted in as the NDP candidate for the riding in a formal nomination meeting held on Saturday, Aug. 15, and gave a short speech to the assembled party members. Former NDP MP Len Taylor and the former candidate from 2011, Glenn Tait, were in the audience.

After the speech, Arias was quick to show energy while speaking with reporters.

"I feel like the horse out of the gate here, just being held back, and I want to get going," said Arias.

"I want to start talking to people, I want to get our office set up, I want to start calling in volunteers. I have already had many inboxes on Facebook (with) people wanting to be part of this historic election. You know, I am not going to be turning anyone away, because I believe that everyone in the riding wants a change. Even the Conservatives, I believe, want a change."

Arias said the primary motivation behind her entry into federal politics was the passing of Bill C-51, which has been facing considerable criticism both in Ottawa and across the country.

“Bill C-51 is very scary legislation, and people in Canada need to open up their eyes and really see what it is,” said Arias.

“I’ve always voted NDP and always supported the NDP party, and I believe in their vision. I believe in what they have as a party to bring to the table. Where they stand on all their issues is something I can get behind 100 per cent.”

As for how she plans to beat Conservative candidate Gerry Ritz, Arias said she thinks residents of Battlefords –Lloydminster are looking for an MP that will pay attention, while she does not yet want to speak for what they want to see done.

“I think this riding has been ignored for so long, and I don’t think people have a good idea collectively of where things stand,” said Arias.

“Does Gerry Ritz really know what people in this riding want? Has that consensus been taken? For me to speak for what the people in this riding want is a little bit premature. I believe that they need to be consulted with, spoken with, and sat down with, to really talk about what they want, what they need, and what they don’t want here.”

Arias also said she plans to focus on young members of the riding, as well as the First Nations and Metis residents of the area, though those groups will not be her only focus.

“If 10,000 (First Nations and Metis) came out, we would win, hands down, with the core NDP support, we would win this riding,” said Arias.

According to Arias, the NDP campaign in Battlefords-Lloydminster will be strategic, as there is a long stretch of time before the vote on October 19.

“I’ve ran broke campaigns before, and I’ve won,” said Arias.

“I don’t need a whole lot of money. People want to believe in something that they can relate to, that they can touch, that they can feel, and that they can see, and understand. I believe that the people in this riding will see me as that person that they can relate to.”

With the official addition of Arias, the race for Battlefords-Lloydminster in 2015 is now a three-way race between Arias, Liberal candidate Larry Ingram, and Conservative candidate Gerry Ritz.

Direct Link: <http://www.meridianbooster.com/2015/08/18/sandra-arias-officially-nominated-for-ndp>

Irvin Studin: Confronting the Aboriginal question



Commission chairman Justice Murray Sinclair, centre, and fellow commissioners Marie Wilson, right, and Wilton Littlechild discuss the commission's report on Canada's residential school system at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Apart from the recent Liberal announcement in Saskatoon on First Nations education, the Aboriginal question has not yet really entered the lexicon of the federal election. It should very soon, as it's by far the most complex and consequential one for Canada today and for the foreseeable future.

What is the Aboriginal question that our leaders must address? On the one hand, it is about how to lift Canada's indigenous people from the posture of being the losing parties — strategically speaking — in Canadian history to one of being co-equals in Canadian governance this century. On the other hand, it is about ensuring that the Canadian state remains coherent and governable, even as this transition to Aboriginal co-equality takes place.

How do we make indigenous people co-equals in Canadian governance? Canada has already largely accomplished this with our French-Canadian minority, which enjoys full legal, political, cultural, educational and linguistic rights and opportunities in a land of general prosperity.

At some point, the party leaders will have to address the myriad of Aboriginal issues that will shape the future of our country

Historically defeated, the French Canadian in Canada — and in Quebec especially — today walks with his or her shoulders held high, properly self-respecting and in turn respected by the English-speaking majority as politically equal and as hailing from a culture that is just as prestigious as the Anglo-Saxon culture of the historical victors in North America. The French language is not only studied in all of the schools of English-speaking Canada, but is held in equally high regard in official national institutions and in the minds of most Canadians.

Part of the push to co-equal status in Canada for the Aboriginal people will involve making the binational logic at the heart of Canadian constitutionalism far more porous for

purposes of Aboriginal representation, control of territory and governing responsibilities. This will involve reimagining the internal borders and identities of Canada in ways that are more eclectic than the 10 provinces-plus-three territories mental map that most Canadians currently have of our country.

A pivotal aspect of this push must also be the revival and mainstreaming of certain Aboriginal languages, including major ones like Cree, Ojibwe, Inuktitut and Michif. If one or more of these languages were, as with the Maori language in New Zealand, made official, this would lend sudden prestige to Aboriginal cultures that were relegated to the peripheries of Canadian society.

If the vision of Aboriginal Canadians being resuscitated from strategic defeat into political and cultural co-equality is morally compelling, it nonetheless comes with significant risks to the efficacy and legitimacy of the Canadian political project. The courts, which have over the last four decades laid the jurisprudential foundations for eventual policy and statutory pushes by our executive and legislative branches, have had precious little to say about these risks.

What are these risks? The first one concerns the very legitimacy of Ottawa over time to govern over, pass laws for and enforce these laws in all parts of Canada — including parts where increasingly well-educated First Nations enjoy significant degrees of self-government or are contesting title to land or treaty rights. Expanded Aboriginal land claims, vindicated by litigation, coupled with improvements in Aboriginal economic and spiritual well-being through affirmation of constitutional rights and important political reforms will doubtless help to right the ship of justice, but they will also put great centrifugal pressure on Ottawa to justify its role as the political centre of Canadian life.

The second, growing risk, concerns Canada's ability to exploit natural resources and to deliver on major infrastructure projects of national consequence. Growing lack of clarity on the Crown's duty to consult and fiduciary requirements, regular threats of litigation and extremely long turnaround times will make governments and industry alike increasingly diffident in betting on Canadian resources and undertaking large-scale national building projects. Just as worryingly, foreign companies and investors will be incorporating these risks into their investment calculus and may turn to simpler theatres for greater returns.

In short, as Canada begins to address the enduring moral dimension of the Aboriginal question, it will be confronted by it, with growing regularity and intensity, at a strategic level. The capacity of the federal and provincial governments to move decisively on a host of strategic fronts will be significantly blunted.

Aboriginals might before long have effective or even constitutional-legal veto powers in many aspects of Canadian governance that are critical to the advancement of core Canadian strategic interests, including rapid and efficient development and marketing of natural resources (including in the North and the Arctic), population and settlement patterns for Canadians and new Canadians, control of specific territories (say, for

purposes of national sovereignty or territorial integrity) and various species of infrastructure projects, including transport infrastructure, needed to continue to build, bind and modernize the country.

The federation, with Aboriginal people more than ever at its core as equals, will become internally more complicated and more interesting. But it will also become more difficult to manoeuvre for great purposes. The management of this vexing paradox will have to take place in the political branches, not in the courts. Let's see what the political branch has to say about this paradox over the course of this election.

National Post

Irvin Studin is editor-in-chief and publisher of Global Brief magazine, and president of the Institute for 21st Century Questions.

Direct Link: <http://news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/irvin-studin-confronting-the-aboriginal-question>

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami draws 3 candidates for president

Election set for Sept. 17 in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 19, 2015 4:05 PM CT Last Updated: Aug 20, 2015 6:58 AM CT



Terry Audla, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, will vie for a second term at the next election in September. (Twitter)

Natan Obed of Iqaluit and Jerry Komaksiutiksak of Ottawa have both thrown their names in the ring to take on the incumbent president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

Terry Audla, who was first elected in 2012, has confirmed he will seek a second term.

ITK board members and delegates are set to choose the next president through a secret ballot on Sept. 17 at the organization's annual general meeting in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.

Candidates will have 10 minutes to speak, and are encouraged to give their remarks in person.

However, they may also speak by telephone.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/inuit-tapiriit-kanatami-draws-3-candidates-for-president-1.3196892>

OCT. 19 FEDERAL ELECTION: Martin to visit Six Nations and New Credit on Friday

By [Michael-Allan Marion](#), Brantford Expositor

Wednesday, August 19, 2015 9:28:51 EDT PM



Former prime minister Paul Martin will visit Six Nations and New Credit on Friday. (The Canadian Press)

Former Liberal prime minister Paul Martin will talk about how to further aboriginal education during a visit to Six Nations and New Credit on Friday.

He will be joined by Brantford-Brant Liberal candidate Danielle Takacs.

Since retiring from politics in 2006, Martin has made aboriginal education his passion,

Martin, who was prime minister from 2004 to 2006, says he sees education as a key to achieving a better life on First Nations.

"Aboriginal students should not leave their cultural heritage or identity at the door of the classroom," said Martin.

"We believe that aboriginal students have a right to the same quality education as non-aboriginal students. Aboriginal youth, like all other youth around the world, will rise to the challenge and succeed when given hope, support and opportunity."

While at Six Nations and New Credit, Martin and Takacs also will discuss the Liberal aboriginal education program released by Leader Justin Trudeau that calls for spending \$515 million a year, rising to \$750 million, in core annual funding for First Nations kindergarten to Grade 12 education, \$500 million over three years for First Nations education infrastructure, and \$50 million in additional annual support for post-secondary students.

Martin and Takacs will meet with Six Nations clan mothers and elders in a private meeting starting at 9:45 a.m. Then they will visit Grand River Employment and Training.

At 11 a.m., they will tour Six Nations Polytechnic and have a roundtable discussion with Polytech and GREAT staff.

They will have lunch at the Mississaugas of the New Credit Community Hall. The guests will include New Credit Chief Bryan LaForme, Six Nations elected Chief Ava Hill, Brant County Mayor Ron Eddy, Brant MPP Dave Levac and Brantford Coun. Cheryl Antoski, who is representing Brantford Mayor Chris Friel's office.

After lunch, they will tour the Six Nations water treatment plant and the former Mohawk Institute residential school.

Other Brantford-Brant candidates are Conservative Phil McColeman, New Democrat Marc Laferriere, Kevin Brandt of the Green Party and Libertarian Rob Ferguson.

Direct Link: <http://www.brantfordexpositor.ca/2015/08/19/oct-19-federal-election-martin-to-visit-six-nations-and-new-credit-on-friday>

Metis candidate Louis De Jaeger running for the Liberals

[Investigates](#) | August 19, 2015 by [Todd Lamirande](#) |



Louis De Jaeger (left) long-time Chilliwack BC restrarateur

Louis De Jaeger definitely has a challenge as he runs in the riding of [Chilliwack-Hope](#), smack dab in the middle of what's considered British Columbia's bible belt. His opponents are [Seonaigh MacPherson](#) of the NDP, [Thomas Cheney](#) of the Green Party, and [Mark Strahl](#) of the Conservatives. Strahl is the son of Chuck Strahl who was Minister of Indian Affairs for three years, 2007-2010.



De Jaeger is owner of Bravo, a restaurant in downtown Chilliwack, with 35 years in the hospitality industry. His ownership of Bravo has netted him 4 Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce Dining Excellence Awards and the 2011 Outstanding Achievement for Aboriginal Business in BC. He has been a staunch advocate for wild salmon and refuses to serve the farmed brand to his customers.

On his Facebook page, De Jaeger says he is [proud of his Metis heritage](#); he's a member of the Chilliwack Metis Association. The Sto:lo are the largest group of Indigenous people living in the riding. He sits on the board of Sto:lo Community Futures, which helps finance and develop business on reserve lands. "The Stó:lo- are very inviting," De Jaeger [told Business in Vancouver](#). "They always have been. They help all aboriginal business on Stó:lo- territory." He mentors young chefs, working closely with the Stó:lō Aboriginal Skills and Education Training (SASET) Program.

De Jaeger got a very early start on the campaign. He was acclaimed the Liberal candidate way back last October. According to the [Chilliwack Progress](#) he gave a nod to the wisdom elders in his acceptance speech. "We create balance and harmony by treating one

another with kindness and respect, and we must make the effort to learn to live together in a good way,” he said. “We have not experienced this with the current government.”

Despite the popularity of his restaurant, De Jaeger is in a tough fight to win. Chilliwack-Hope is a new riding carved out of two older ones that voted overwhelmingly Conservative in the last election. Mark Strahl won Chilliwack-Fraser Canyon in 2011 with over 57% of the popular vote. The threehundred.com currently gives the Conservatives an 84% chance of holding on to the riding. Even with the backing of the majority of Sto:lo voters, De Jaeger has to be considered a long shot.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/08/19/metis-candidate-louis-de-jaeger-running-for-the-liberals/>

Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources

Approving Nunavut uranium project would be a “political disaster:” wildlife board

"It will erode the confidence the Inuit have in the regulatory system created under the NLCA"

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, August 13, 2015 - 3:59 pm



The Nunavut Impact Review Board held hearings into Areva's proposed Kiggavik uranium project at Baker Lake's community hall from March 3-14. (PHOTO COURTESY OF AREVA)

Bernard Valcourt, the minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, may be busy campaigning in the federal election, but he's also had a lot of mail to read from organizations debating the future of uranium mining in Nunavut.

The latest of those groups — the Kivalliq Wildlife Board — sent the minister a letter earlier this week that calls on Valcourt to respect a decision by the Nunavut Impact Review Board that recommend Areva Canada's proposed Kiggavik uranium project not be approved right now.

If Valcourt were to reject the NIRB's recommendation, such a move would be a "political disaster" for Nunavut, the KWB said Aug. 11.

Following hearings earlier this year, the NIRB published a report recommending that Areva's proposed uranium project, located outside of Baker Lake, [not go ahead at this time](#), for lack of a defined start date.

But last month, Areva sent a letter to Valcourt encouraging the minister to reject the NIRB's recommendation, [suggesting the board's review of its Kiggavik project was not thorough enough](#).

Since then a number of organizations have shot back, saying that if the minister decides to reject that report, he'll also reject the wishes of Nunavut Inuit.

"First and foremost, if you reject the NIRB report and recommendation, it will erode the confidence the Inuit of Nunavut have in the regulatory system created under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement," wrote Stanley Adjuk, president of the Kivalliq Wildlife Board, in an Aug. 11 letter.

"The value of the entire NLCA will be seriously questionable if you grant Areva's request and overturn the NIRB recommendation. This would be a political disaster for Nunavut, and for Canada."

In its letter, the KWB joins forces with the [Baker Lake hunters and trappers organization](#), and [Mining Watch Canada](#), who have delivered similar messages to Ottawa.

"The KWB does not agree with reviewing and permitting proposals for major development projects that do not have start dates in the reasonably foreseeable future," the KWB letter continued. "To do so undermines the ability of Inuit hunters and elders to meaningfully participate in such processes."

"Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit — also known as Inuit traditional knowledge — is time-sensitive knowledge."

You can read the KWB's full letter [here](#).

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674approving_nunavut_uranium_project_would_be_a_political_disaster_says_w/

Year's delay for Site C would cost \$335 million: B.C. Hydro

William Stodalka / Alaska Highway News
August 16, 2015 09:07 AM



Two Treaty 8 First Nations are seeking an injunction on the Site C dam project until their provincial and federal legal cases are concluded

A year-long delay on Site C construction would tack on \$335 million to the dam's costs, B.C. Hydro says.

The Crown utility filed an illuminating response in B.C. Supreme Court Aug. 12, challenging a pair of Treaty 8 First Nations who are seeking an injunction on the dam's construction until their provincial and federal legal cases are concluded.

"Stopping this work pending the hearing of the proceeding creates a serious likelihood that the project will be delayed by a full year because critical milestones will be missed," Hydro lawyers wrote.

"The estimated increase in project costs if the project is delayed for a year is \$335 million."

Hydro has already pegged the cost of the dam at \$8.8 billion, which includes contingencies.

According to court documents, Hydro estimates the delay will drive up interest rates, add demobilization and remobilization expenses, and add other sunk costs.

Hydro even goes so far to note that a delay would imperil Chetwynd contractor Paul Paquette and Sons Construction, which has been awarded a contract to clear sections of the south bank of the Peace River.

“(Paul Paquette and Sons) has no other source of work if its clearing contract is suspended and would face severe problems retaining employees and paying its costs,” the documents state, quoting affidavits from Todd Powell and Hydro employee Siobhan Jackson, which were not publicly available.

Hydro documents from 2012 list Powell as an employee of Paul Paquette and Sons Construction.

Calls to Paquette’s Chetwynd office asking for confirmation about this statement were not returned as of press time.

Preliminary construction work for the dam began July 27.

However, both West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations filed an application in court Aug. 4 against the 36 provincial permits that allowed the work to proceed. The two nations have a pair of cases in both the B.C. and Canadian Supreme Courts against the dam’s environmental assessment certificate issued by the B.C. government.

The two bands are seeking an injunction on the permits, which would require Hydro to stop work on parts of the project, until the courts have ruled on the bands' lawsuits and the project’s legality.

Hydro did not accept any of their requests for an injunction. Hydro says additional costs to the project will be borne by ratepayers.

The claims have yet to be proven in court.

A hearing date on this petition is scheduled for Aug. 18.

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/news/b-c/year-s-delay-for-site-c-would-cost-335-million-b-c-hydro-1.2031999#sthash.0Tx8VSDe.dpuf>

Land Claims & Treaty Rights

Historic treaty signed among 10 First Nations and tribes in Banff

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 14, 2015 1:14 PM MT Last Updated: Aug 14, 2015 2:39 PM MT



Since the founding of Canada, the common practice is for treaties to be signed between First Nations and the federal government, but that wasn't always the case.

On Thursday, First Nations from both sides of the Canada-U.S. border gathered in Banff to welcome the Stoney Nakoda and the Samson Cree as signatories to a treaty that harkens back to a time when these kinds of agreements were more common.

The Buffalo Treaty, as it's called, creates an alliance among the 10 groups, aimed at:

- Engaging tribes and First Nations in continuing dialogue on bison conservation
- Uniting the political power of the tribes and First Nations of the Northern Great Plains
- Advancing an international call for the restoration of the bison
- Engaging youth in the treaty process
- Strengthening and renewing ancient cultural and spiritual relationships with bison and grasslands in the Northern Great Plains

The agreement stemmed from proposals to bring free-ranging bison back to the areas like Banff National Park and aims to restore links that existed when bison roamed free throughout the territories of the signatories.

"For me, it's historic," says Chief Ernest Wesley of the Wesley First Nation (Stoney Nakoda).

"We've become brothers again with the buffalo."



Bison in Canada's Elk Island National Park. (Courtesy of American Prairie Foundation, Dennis J. Lingohr/AP)

An open treaty

The Buffalo Treaty was first signed in September 2014 in Montana by eight nations:

- The Blackfeet Nation
- Blood Tribe
- Siksika Nation
- Piikani Nation
- The Assiniboine and Gros Ventre Tribes of Fort Belknap Indian Reservation
- The Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of Fort Peck Indian Reservation
- The Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Indian Reservation
- Tsuu T'ina Nation

More signatories are welcome to join.

"The treaty is open," said Leroy Little Bear, who organized the Banff ceremony. "Other nations can sign on."



Six First Nations from Canada and four tribes from the U.S. gathered Thursday in Banff to sign a treaty called The Buffalo Treaty, an agreement aimed at furthering bison conservation efforts. (Evelyne Asselin/CBC)

Samson Cree Nation's tipi stolen

One visiting First Nation had a bad surprise on the morning of the signing — the canvas surrounding the poles of the Samson Cree Nation's tipi was stolen.

Most nations set up camps the day before on the Indian Grounds to combine the signature ceremony with the Stoney Nakoda Family Camp event.

The First Nation from Maskwacis, Alta., had brought a brand new white canvas to mark the signing of the treaty, but it disappeared overnight.

"To turn a negative into a positive, our chief said that we are in Treaty 7 territory, and our traditional practice is to gift. So we have gifted our tipi to somebody who really wanted it," said Beverly Crier.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/historic-treaty-signed-among-10-first-nations-and-tribes-in-banff-1.3190715>

First Nations win in Kapyong court clash

By [David Larkins](#), *Winnipeg Sun*

First posted: Saturday, August 15, 2015 02:47 PM CDT



Four Manitoba First Nations have earned a significant victory in the ongoing saga surrounding the Kapyong Barracks, after a decision handed down Friday by the Federal Court of Appeal.

Justice David Stratas upheld, in a decision handed down late Friday, a lower court ruling that the federal government failed to adequately consult with First Nations in the sale of the land along Kenaston Boulevard.

The barracks, which have laid empty since 2004, have been at the centre of an ongoing legal battle between the federal government and Treaty 1 First Nations, which sued the government in 2008, arguing they should have been consulted before transferring of the land for sale and redevelopment three years prior.

The battle has hindered development in the area and also put the city in a holding pattern with its plans to widen Kenaston Boulevard.

In his decision, Stratas ruled that while the government failed to consult with the First Nations, the latter was not without fault, either.

"On occasion some of the four respondents have been dilatory in investigating the Barracks property, asking questions of Canada, and pursuing their interests in the Barracks property," he wrote. "On occasion, some of them were not responsive to invitations by Canada to engage in consultative activities."

To that, Stratas wrote he hoped the decision would pave the way for a cooperative effort to find a solution to the land battle.

"It is to be hoped that whatever rancour, bitterness and mistrust among the parties may have existed in the past, the parties will now proceed to engage in constructive, respectful consultations concerning the Barracks property for the benefit of all."

Direct Link: <http://www.winnipegsun.com/2015/08/15/first-nations-win-in-kapyong-court-clash>

Fish a renewed focus for treaty talks

by [Josh Massey - Terrace Standard](#)

posted Aug 15, 2015 at 9:00 AM— updated Aug 15, 2015 at 10:12 AM

While last week saw the landmark signing of agreements-in-principle outlining the key framework leading toward final treaty negotiations for both the Kitselas and Kitsumkalum first nations, another set of talks is also taking place.

That's because provisions for fish allocations and use aren't contained within the two agreements-in-principle although they do contain provisions for land, money, other resource use and governance.

Negotiations around fish are instead contained within those separate talks.

Fish provisions had been missing from the agreements-in-principle because of a general federal government policy dating back several years that they wouldn't be negotiated within those agreements.

That stems from a federal royal commission into the decline of the Fraser River sockeye runs of 2009 and the federal government wanting to first consider the Cohen Commission's recommendations.

But that changed last year, says Hilary Lightening of the Tsimshian First Nations Treaty Society which represents Tsimshian First Nations in those talks.

"Canada opened up the fisheries mandate in late December of 2014, and the Kitsumkalum, Kitselas and Metlakatla are currently negotiating the fish chapter," said Lightening.

"Basically the feds just said it's currently under review and it's off the negotiating table," she said of the implications following the release of the Cohen report.

Individual Tsimshian First Nations will negotiate specific allocations based on their own requirements, said Lightening.

"It's not a one-size-fits-all approach. Each nation has its interests in the fisheries component, but they are all at the table together," she said.

Although Metlakatla is not as advanced as are the Kitselas and Kitsumkalum overall treaty negotiations, it did decide to join the overall talks through the Tsimshian treaty society.

Also in negotiation now are provisions surrounding migratory birds and how hunting and conservation of these species would be regulated within Tsimshian treaty lands, something which is now a federal domain.

Tsimshian negotiators had warned that final treaty talks, even if agreements-in-principle were reached, could not be concluded without an agreement on fish.

The Aug.4 signing of the Kitselas and Kitsumkalum agreements-in-principle confirmed details first reached two years ago.

That was when both the Kitselas and Kitsumkalum held votes to approve of the agreements in principle and both were passed with the Kitselas agreement, for example, receiving a 67 per cent 'yes' vote.

The provincial government at the time also gave its approval to the two agreements but federal approval wasn't officially recognized until last week.

The Kitsumkalum Agreement-in-Principle provides for approximately 45,406 hectares of land, north and west of Terrace, and \$44.2 million (to be adjusted for inflation), once a final agreement is reached.

The Kitselas Agreement-in-Principle provides for 36,158 hectares of land east of Terrace, and \$34.7 million (to be adjusted for inflation), once a final agreement is reached.

Both First Nations also received specific parcels of provincial Crown land not included with the agreements-in-principle after their 'yes' votes.

Pending negotiator agreement on final treaty provisions, the documents will once again be subject to a vote among Kitsumkalum and Kitselas voters.

Officials were saying that could happen within two years.

The two treaty documents must also be approved through legislation by the provincial and federal governments.

Representatives from the two First Nations and the provincial government spoke at the signings.

"We've been waiting 20-some years, it's a long time to wait," said Kitselas Chief Councillor Joe Bevan. "I mean, having two people decide on the right course is tough enough, but getting three governments all wanting to position themselves, well that's tough."

The waiting time between the Kitselas vote in favour of the agreement-in-principle in 2013, and the recent federal signing off on the terms, was also drawn out.

“This is a huge step, we’ve been waiting two-and-a-half years for them to review the document,” said Bevan.

“It’s all up for negotiation. We can’t assume anything is a given,” he added of the next steps in negotiation.

To honour the step forward, and to indicate Kitsumkalum’s desire to keep progressing, Kitsumkalum Chief Councillor Don Roberts gave the province and the federal government each a hand-painted paddle.

“It is to signify that we will paddle together,” said Roberts.

The federal government was to have been represented by Conservative Member of Parliament Mark Strahl from the Fraser Valley in his capacity as the parliamentary secretary to the federal aboriginal affairs minister.

But the federal election call of Aug. 2, which dissolved Parliament two days before the signing of the agreements, ended Strahl’s official role and his trip here was cancelled.

A senior federal negotiator instead represented the federal government.

The provincial government was represented at both signings by aboriginal affairs and reconciliation minister John Rustad.

He said the agreements were not only important to the Kitselas and Kitsumkalum but important to all northwest residents.

And he expressed hope final treaty talks can now move quickly forward.

“We have a team in place looking at how we can accelerate the treaty process, and we are expecting the initial component of the work to come out perhaps by mid December, and then we will take that and move forward and see what we can do,” he said.

Rustad hoped other B.C. treaty talks can also be accelerated.

Direct Link: <http://www.terracestandard.com/news/321958021.html>

First Nations communities call Kapyong Barracks update a victory

By [Talia Ricci](#) Reporter Global News, August 15, 2015 6:56 pm



WINNIPEG – It's being called a great victory in First Nations communities.

"This is a result of many, many years of a fight by the First Nations to have their right recognized," said Norman Boudreau, the lawyer representing the First Nations group.

A long awaited federal court of appeal ruling came down late Friday, saying the federal government did fail to properly consult several Manitoba First Nations before the sale of Kapyong Barracks.

"The judgment of the federal court of appeal really sets out as its never done before," said Boudreau. "What Canada must do is to consult with First Nation when their rights are at stake."

Since 2004, the land along Kenaston Boulevard that was once the Kapyong military base has been vacant. In 2007, Treaty 1 bands asked the federal government if they could claim it. It has been tied up in court ever since. Now First Nations leaders are eager to finally start development, even though it could still be years before a shovel hits the ground.

"I would like to see some businesses, and something that will benefit our people and the city of Winnipeg residents," said Alfred Hayden, chief of Roseau First Nation.

Back in March, an open discussion was held to educate the public about urban reserves. Leaders of the forum were happy with the turnout and say it's an indication of a changing Winnipeg.

"Yes there is still relationship building to do but I feel positive that will happen," said Leah Gazan, president of the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg.

The next step is likely consultations, but it is not known whether the federal government will appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2167642/first-nations-communities-call-kapyong-barracks-update-a-victory/>

Peel Watershed foes prepare to square off in Yukon court

Yukon Government appealed a Supreme Court decision that struck down its management plan for the region

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 16, 2015 2:00 PM CT Last Updated: Aug 16, 2015 2:00 PM CT



A map shows the expansive Peel River watershed. The Yukon Government has been battling First Nations and environmentalists over its management plan for the Peel. (CBC)

It's a big week for the Yukon government, First Nations and environmental groups battling over the future of the Peel River Watershed.

On Thursday, the Yukon Court of Appeal will review a Supreme Court case dealing with development in the area.

The territorial government filed for an appeal in December after the Yukon Supreme Court struck down its controversial land use plan. Justice Ron Veale found the Yukon government's modifications to the plan did not respect the land use process set out in the territory's agreements with First Nations.

The court ruled the government had not abided by the intent of the Umbrella Final Agreement, which oversees land claims in Yukon.

In its appeal, the government says it should retain final say over Crown Land.

First Nations and environmental group oppose any kind of development in the region. Members of the public have held several rallies since then in support of protecting the area.

Alternatives to mining

At a recent rally, Whitehorse student Vaskor Chowdhury promoted protecting the area, but with an eye on economic development.

"I personally think that it should be protected for now, then commercialized in 20 years for the water there, instead of being mined," he said. "The water there is more valuable than whatever elements, iron and stuff (is) in there. Bottling up the water will at least save it, and it will still be a habitat for the animals."

Pro- and anti-development advocates will have their cases heard later this week.

The Yukon Court of Appeal will hear the government appeal on Thursday and Friday.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/peel-watershed-foes-prepare-to-square-off-in-yukon-court-1.3192944>

Cecil, Nanuq and Inuk

"The Canadian polar bear sport hunt exemplifies the exercise of indigenous rights and indigenous decision-making under conditions of free, prior and informed consent"

SPECIAL TO NUNATSIAQ NEWS, August 17, 2015 - 9:35 am

POLAR BEAR SPORT HUNT AND WELFARE INCOME IN NUNAVUT

Community*	Inuit house-holds**	Inuit median income (C\$)**	Inuit unemployment rate**	Annual welfare income (C\$)***	Annual polar bear sport hunt income (C\$)****	Polar bear sport hunt income as share of welfare income
Arctic Bay	140	11,872	26%	652,708	120,517	18%
Clyde River	160	13,440	25%	944,613	143,520	15%
Coral Harbour	180	13,376	21%	826,602	169,312	20%
Grise Fiord	n/a	n/a	n/a	75,010	145,645	194%
Pond Inlet	270	16,304	24%	942,446	96,490	10%
Qikiqtarjuaq	120	16,352	33%	427,209	140,600	33%
Resolute	n/a	n/a	n/a	65,153	361,000	554%
TOTAL				3,933,741	1,177,084	30%

*Communities accounting for aggregate 75% of polar bear sport hunts in Nunavut between 2000 and 2008

**Data sourced from Statistics Canada, 2006 Aboriginal Population Profile

***Data sourced from Government of Nunavut, 2006 tax year

****Data sourced from HSI/IFAW, "Economics of polar bear trophy hunting in Canada" (2009)

n/a - Data unavailable due to data quality or privacy reasons; <100 households each

This graph compares the income derived in seven Nunavut communities from the polar bear sport hunt with median income, unemployment rates and welfare income. (COURTESY OF ANTHONY SPECA)



The hysterical reaction to the killing of Cecil the lion could produce collateral damage: Inuit hunters how use polar bear sports hunting to generate badly needed cash income. (FILE PHOTO)

ANTHONY SPECA

(First published Aug. 11, 2015 in The Arctic Journal.)

Amidst the whirlwind of outrage surrounding the death of Cecil the lion last month, it's easy to lose sight of the facts.

Here's a fact that might surprise Canadians. Walter Palmer, the infamous American bow-hunter who killed the famous Zimbabwean lion for sport, also travelled to far northern Canada to kill a polar bear.

We know this because we know that Mr Palmer has in fact killed a polar bear, and because we also know that Canada has been the only country in the world to allow a polar bear sport hunt since 1973.

Unlike Cecil the lion — unhappily named after Africa's most prominent British colonialist, Cecil Rhodes — the polar bear that Mr Palmer killed somewhere in Arctic Canada had no name to make it seem more personable. Nor was it a valuable tourist attraction in itself.

While tourists do visit the Arctic in the hope of seeing a polar bear, there's no particular polar bear they hope to see. In Zimbabwe, by contrast, groups of well-heeled tourists prepared to pay up to US \$9,800 per day to catch a glimpse of the regal Cecil are now cancelling their bookings.

These tourists are sending an unmistakable message to authorities in Zimbabwe about the economic value of lions — however unknown to ordinary Zimbabweans Cecil himself actually was.

In Hwange National Park — on the trail to the immensely popular Victoria Falls, easily accessible by road and boasting enviable tourist facilities — ecotourism plays a significant role in unlocking that value. Cecil was so accustomed to people that he would suffer eager tourists to approach within 10 metres of him.

The source of perhaps hundreds of thousands of dollars of ecotourism revenues in his 13-year life, in death Cecil was worth just US \$50,000 — the approximate price Mr Palmer paid to get a sporting chance at him. Coincidentally or not, this isn't too far off the going rate that Mr Palmer probably paid for his polar bear as well.

Of course, it's certainly possible for the ecotourism and sport hunting industries to operate profitably together — just as they did in Hwange.

Some conservation biologists have argued that, like ecotourism, properly regulated “conservation hunting” can provide the income and incentives for local communities to live alongside dangerous or nuisance animals without exterminating them.

The furious debate sparked by Cecil's death has already divided hunting apologists and animal activists along these lines.

From Africa to the Arctic

But let's set aside that debate for now. Imagine instead that Cecil the lion lived somewhere as chock-full of spectacular wildlife as Hwange, yet so remote of access and bereft of holiday facilities that ecotourism is still more future potential than present earner.

Imagine that you live there too, but in poverty, and that Mr Palmer has just offered you US \$50,000 to guide him to a lion.

Your government sanctions the sport hunting of lions within a strict quota system based on the best scientific advice, and your traditional hunting community is one of just a handful with access to this quota. You see few ecotourists, and they spend little because you have little they want to buy.

What then? In fact, you don't have to imagine such a place. It approximates the reality in many of the small, far-flung communities of Arctic Canada. The Inuit people living there have the exclusive indigenous right to hunt polar bears for food and fur, as their ancestors traditionally did.

But they must hunt under such strict regulations that even self-defence kills count against the total quota. They also have the right to sell quota to sport hunters, so long as sport hunters then hire Inuit guides and dog-teams at a typical cost of between US \$30,000 and US \$50,000.

On top of that income, Inuit keep the meat from the sport hunt, which they consider delicious even if sport hunters might not.

Given these benefits, it's easy to see why Canada established and promoted the polar bear sport hunt as an economic development opportunity for Inuit. Especially after the 1983 European ban on the seal fur trade wiped out around 60 percent of Inuit community income, impoverishing them overnight, the government hoped the sport hunt could replace some of that loss, or at least keep the welfare bill down.

For their part, Inuit were at first reluctant to adopt the sport hunt, which is no more part of their traditional culture than ecotourism is. Even today a few Inuit communities in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut decline to host a polar bear sport hunt at all.

But those communities that do host one have chosen it on their own authority, through their own local hunting and trapping associations. In this way, the Canadian polar bear sport hunt exemplifies the exercise of indigenous rights and indigenous decision-making under conditions of free, prior and informed consent.

It's also a financial lifeline for some Inuit hunters, who would take polar bears for food and fur in any case, but without the extra income. The major problem, it seems, is that the brokers who connect wealthy sport hunters with Inuit guides still manage to keep a substantial fraction of the profits for themselves.

Most importantly, perhaps, the polar bear sport hunt offers at least some Inuit and their families the means to maintain a more traditional life on the land than they otherwise could through ordinary jobs — if any were available — or simply through welfare. This means the preservation of traditional knowledge and skills that are easily lost.

Whatever its calculable economic benefits, the cultural benefits of the sport hunt are incalculable. Cecil the lion lived in a country where poor farmers have been evicted from their land so the rich can set up game ranches for the hunting trade.

The polar bear that Mr. Palmer killed lived in a country where Inuit have been formally vested with rights and title to their land so they can prosper from it.

The economics of polar bears

Whatever the circumstances, however, hunting animals for sport in Arctic Canada is just as controversial as it is in Africa. In 2009, after a careful joint study of the economics of the polar bear sport hunt, the Humane Society International and the International Fund for Animal Welfare concluded that its benefits are “far too limited and far too heavily concentrated in too few hands to amount to anything approximating a solution to the broader socio-economic troubles faced by Inuk [sic] people seeking to integrate subsistence food sourcing into their lives.”

The implication? The polar bear sport hunt should be eliminated.

In support of their conclusion, HSI and IFAW rightly point out that only about a third of Inuit communities in Nunavut and the NWT regularly host polar bear sport hunts, and only another half do so sporadically. They also rightly point out that the income generated from the polar bear sport hunt in Nunavut amounts to a mere one-tenth of one percent of the territory's GDP.

And because an Inuk hunter can't open his wallet and spend GDP to provide for his family, HSI and IFAW go on to point out — again rightly — that polar bear sport hunt income doesn't even amount to more than a small percentage of the total income of all the Inuit households in any Nunavut or NWT community.

So far, so good. But it's hardly a surprise that a very limited hunt of a relatively scarce animal doesn't provide enough income to enough Inuit to solve their “broader socio-economic troubles.” Whatever the government had hoped of the polar bear sport hunt, that would be a fantasy.

It's surely more pertinent to examine instead whether the polar bear sport hunt offers something approaching real financial help to Inuit in need.

Most of the Inuit communities studied by HSI and IFAW have a median income little more than half that of Canada as a whole. Most receive more than twice the amount of government transfers as a share of total community income than is doled out in Canada as a whole.

Most have unemployment rates exceeding 20 or even 30 percent—many times that of Canada as a whole. Given these social conditions, it seems disingenuous for HSI and IFAW to argue that the income from a small and legally restricted sport hunt compares unfavourably with total industrial output in Nunavut.

If income from the sport hunt were compared to, say, the welfare bill in Nunavut communities instead, the story would look rather different.

The table above tells that story. In the seven communities that accounted for 75 percent of all polar bear sport hunts in Nunavut between 2000 and 2008, the income from those hunts was equal to nearly a third of the government's welfare bill.

And in the High Arctic exile communities of Grise Fiord and Resolute — whose original inhabitants nearly starved to death after Canada relocated them there in order to assert sovereignty over unoccupied land — the sport hunt provides multiple times the income that welfare does.

Welfare data for NWT communities hosting sport hunts was not available, but it's very likely that the results would look similar.

Now, these results don't mean that polar bear sport hunt income is actually replacing a third of the government's welfare bill in these communities. Welfare eligibility rules are complex, and each individual case would have to be assessed using data that isn't publicly available for privacy reasons.

But considering the dearth of jobs in Inuit communities — as illustrated by the high unemployment figures above — polar bear sport hunt income couldn't easily be replaced except by welfare. So it appears that the sport hunt does offer real financial help to Inuit communities in need—as well as a measure of real self-reliance.

Collateral damage

In fairness to HSI and IFAW, they are alive to these concerns. They recognize that “it would be wrong to pretend that the demise of polar bear trophy hunting will have no economic impact on anyone in Nunavut or the Northwest Territories.”

But they are also certain that “it would likewise be wrong to pretend that polar bear trophy hunting made attainment of a land-based lifestyle feasible for large numbers of

people.” In their view, it’s too insignificant to be much of a loss — especially given moral qualms about killing polar bears for sport.

Once again, this is dubious reasoning. No one pretends that the polar bear sport hunt will ever employ large numbers of Inuit — or that it should. Inuit value highly the animals they have always depended upon — arguably more than animal activists do — and there simply aren’t enough polar bears.

But there also aren’t many Inuit — no more than 1,000 households in the seven communities profiled above. Even if the polar bear sport hunt makes a “decisive economic difference” to only “several dozen individuals” as HSI and IFAW suggest, then perhaps one out of every 10 Inuit households there reap the benefits — both financially and culturally. And those households matter.

It’s one thing to oppose killing an animal like Cecil the lion — or Nanuq the polar bear — just to put a trophy on the wall. But it’s another to oppose Inuk the hunter who has the chance to generate much-needed income whilst keeping his traditional culture alive.

Considering that he must draw from his own subsistence quota to do so, and that he would hunt the same polar bears for food anyway, it seems uncharitable to bar him from realizing any complementary financial benefit at the same time.

Thirty years ago, in a fit of disgust with hunting for fur, the world community effectively barred Inuit from realising the complementary financial benefits from their subsistence hunt for ringed seal. The result was widespread poverty across Arctic Canada that the polar bear sport hunt was intended to help alleviate.

Since then, the world community has twice considered banning international trade in polar bear, though so far without agreement. They may well reconsider it in 2016—and if they do agree this time, it will throw another needless obstacle in the way of securing human lives and livelihood in the Canadian Arctic.

Indeed, thanks to worries about the effects of climate change on polar bears, it’s been illegal since 2008 to import polar bear trophies into the U.S.A., where many big-game sport hunters originate.

And thanks to the death of Cecil the lion, a number of major airlines have adopted policies against carrying hunting trophies irrespective of their source or legality. Critical eyes are already looking northward at the Canadian hunt.

In today’s fit of disgust with hunting for sport, we run the risk of thoughtlessly damaging economically fragile Inuit communities, just as we once did over hunting for fur. Let’s not make that same mistake again.

Anthony Speca was a senior policy official with the Government of Nunavut. He now writes and consults on Arctic issues from the U.K. as Managing Principal of Polar Aspect. [Follow him at his website, Arctic Political Economy.](#)

Direct Link: http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674cecil_nanuq_and_inuk/

Inuit lose bid to block seismic testing off Baffin Island

by The Canadian Press

Posted Aug 18, 2015 10:58 am PDT

Last Updated Aug 18, 2015 at 11:40 am PDT

A tiny Inuit hamlet on the coast of Baffin Island has lost its bid to block seismic testing off its shores.

The Federal Court of Appeal has denied Clyde River's request for a judicial review of a testing permit issued by the National Energy Board.

Justice Eleanor Dawson says the board fulfilled requirements to consult with local Inuit and that consultation doesn't necessarily mean agreement.

She notes that efforts to ensure the tests don't unduly harm wildlife will be ongoing.

The testing is widely opposed across Baffin Island and by Inuit wildlife management bodies.

They fear high-volume underwater blasts used in the tests will injure marine mammals and disrupt harvesting.

Direct Link: <http://www.news1130.com/2015/08/18/inuit-lose-bid-to-block-seismic-testing-off-baffin-island/>

Ontario failed duty to consult First Nations on Hydro One sale, chief says

Publicly owned company a "main vehicle" for economic development on First Nations territory, and a potential source of wealth and jobs.



Chiefs of Ontario leader Isadore Day said he believes the Ontario government should have engaged in “extensive consultation” with First Nations governments about the semi-privatization of Hydro One.

By: [Sara Mojtehdzadeh](#) Work and Wealth reporter, Published on Tue Aug 18 2015

First Nations have been almost completely excluded from the decision to sell Hydro One — even though the sale directly affects aboriginal territories and could dramatically affect their economic and environmental fortunes, according to Chiefs of Ontario leader Isadore Day.

In an exclusive interview with the Star, Chief Day said he believes the Ontario government should have engaged in “extensive consultation” with First Nations governments about the semi-privatization of the company, which has numerous transmission and distribution lines running through First Nations’ territory.

“There was virtually nothing leading up to (the sale), and we know the transmittal of that sale has begun through legislation,” he said, referring to the June 3 budget bill that approved the sale of 60 per cent of Hydro One.

“There was a very big opportunity and responsibility from the Ontario government that just didn’t occur.”

Governments in Canada have a constitutional duty to consult with First Nations communities when they believe a decision will affect aboriginal land and rights.

“The law is relatively clear on this. If government plans to take any action that impacts rights or claims it knows about, the duty (to consult) is triggered,” said Alex Monem, a partner at Pape Salter Teillet LLP, which represents numerous First Nations affected by the decision.

Empowering First Nations

Hydro One transmission and power stations on or near First Nations land in one Ontario region. Critics say the sale will affect the future of aboriginal people across the province.



In its century-long history, Hydro One (previously Ontario Hydro) projects have caused serious disruption on First Nations territories, according to Monem. But more recently, the government-owned corporation has sought to tackle those “legacy issues” by implementing a strict consultation and grievance process for First Nations communities.

It has also formed groundbreaking partnerships with aboriginal communities for infrastructure projects, which are a significant source of economic development and wealth-building for First Nations people. One example is the Saugeen Ojibway Nation’s [2013 acquisition](#) of a 30 per cent stake in the power line running from the Bruce nuclear power station to Milton.

“The Ontario government has used its wholly owned corporations as the main vehicle for reconciling its bad history with First Nations,” Monem said. “Now they’re going to divest themselves of that vehicle.”

Without meaningful consultation with aboriginal leadership going forward, legal experts also say the Wynne government could face serious problems in selling off Hydro One assets.

Paul Seaman, an associate with the prominent law firm Gowlings, said First Nations communities could challenge the decision in court — possibly demanding an injunction to halt proceedings until aboriginal concerns are addressed.

A spokesperson for Hydro One said queries related to its impending sale should be directed to the government. In an emailed statement, Minister of Energy Bob Chiarelli’s spokesperson Dan Moulton said that “engaging in meaningful discussions with First Nations leaders is a top priority for our government.”

“Minister Chiarelli has regularly met with various representatives of Ontario’s First Nations and Metis communities,” he said.

In response to subsequent questions from the Star asking whether the ministry believed the Hydro One sale triggered its duty to consult, a spokesperson said that the government “considers (First Nations’) inclusion in this conversation a vital part of the process.”

The government's final report on the semi-privatization of Hydro One, published in April, makes no mention of the impact on aboriginal rights.

But according to lawyer Seaman there is both a moral and strategic imperative driving the duty to consult — reducing the risk of protest or legal action scuttling major decisions.

"It's the modern reality, and it's good practice in government and industry to embrace it," he said. "It helps achieve certainty in what you're about to do."

The Ministry of Energy's Moulton said he expected Hydro One's partial sale to be raised at an economic development meeting between government officials and the Union of Ontario Indians in Thunder Bay, scheduled for the end of August.

Direct Link: <http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2015/08/18/ontario-failed-duty-to-consult-first-nations-on-hydro-one-sale-chief-says.html>

Site C Dam: First Nations Go To Court To Halt Project

CP | By The Canadian Press

Posted: 08/18/2015 6:53 pm EDT Updated: 08/18/2015 6:59 pm EDT



VANCOUVER — Two northeastern British Columbia First Nations will suffer "irreparable harm" if thousands of hectares of old-growth forest are cleared to build the Site C dam, their lawyer says.

John Gailus told B.C. Supreme Court that a stop-work order should be issued to halt the first phase of the nearly \$9-billion hydroelectric project from proceeding along the Peace River.

He said the Crown granted permits for the preparatory phase of construction without consulting with the West Moberly and Peace River First Nations, which are members of the Treaty 8 Tribal Alliance.

"The Crown truncated their consultation and issued the permits to meet an arbitrary timeline imposed by BC Hydro, we say, contrary to both its contractual obligations and its constitutional obligations," Gailus said Tuesday.

The injunction application comes as the First Nations wait for both B.C. Supreme Court and Federal Court to deliver decisions on a judicial review aimed at quashing the hydroelectric project entirely.

The provincial government granted approval in July for the first of seven construction phases, although the work hasn't yet started.

Court heard the permits authorize the clearing of more than 1,600 hectares of forest, equivalent to about 4,500 truckloads of timber, along the south bank of the Peace River.

Construction of new access roads and bridges, expansion of quarries and removal of beaver dams, eagle nests and the alteration of 163 archeological sites — which may include burial sites — was also authorized, Gailus said.

He told court there's no urgency for starting the project.

"There are significant benefits to the B.C. taxpayers for a delay," he said, adding costs will be higher if the work is allowed to move ahead and then the project is overturned.

Outside court, West Moberly Chief Roland Willson called the consultation process a "farce."

He said the First Nations signed an agreement in April to consult with the province on the first phase, but BC Hydro's permits were approved before any meetings.

Willson was particularly concerned that up to 28 eagle nests would be destroyed.

"It doesn't mean anything to anybody if we don't even talk about it and they approve (the permits)," he said. "We actually have to sit down and work through them together."

Last month, Forests Minister Steve Thomson said each of the two dozen approved permit applications was reviewed for its potential impact on the environment and on aboriginal treaty rights.

Thomson said the province conducted an "appropriate consultation process."

BC Hydro expects construction of Site C to take at least a decade. The utility has said the project will power the equivalent of 450,000 homes per year.

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/08/18/site-c-dam_n_8006592.html

Nunavik leaders share region's plan for the future in Quebec

"The issues at hand will not be resolved easily or without hard work on the government's part and ours"

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, August 20, 2015 - 11:22 am



A one-on-one in Quebec City: Makivik Corp.'s president Jobie Tukkiapik, standing, speaks to Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard Aug. 19 at a supper in in Quebec City as Maggie Emudluk, the Kativik Regional Government's chairperson, at left, listens. (PHOTO COURTESY OF MAKIVIK)



Leaders from Nunavik present the Parnasimautik report Aug. 19 in Quebec City to a roomful of Quebec government ministers and officials. (PHOTO COURTESY OF MAKIVIK)

Quebec politicians and officials should now be more informed about the needs and aspirations of Nunavik.

That's after Nunavik leaders presented the Parnasimautik Consultation (We are Preparing) Report to the Plan Nord Ministerial Committee in Quebec City this week.

The [report, signed in 2014](#), sets out clear priorities for Nunavik's leadership, from the need to protect and promote the Inuit language and culture, to identifying clear terms for allowing resource development in the region.

The report — prepared in response to Quebec's Plan Nord development scheme for northern Quebec — reflects the outcome of the most comprehensive community consultation ever carried out in the history of Nunavik, Makivik Corp. said in a news release about the Aug. 19 meeting.

"I felt proud to present the report that we worked so hard to produce to the Quebec government. The issues at hand will not be resolved easily or without hard work on the government's part and ours," said Maggie Emudluk, chairperson of the Kativik Regional Government, who co-chaired the community tours that produced the Parnasimautik Report, in the release.

During the three-hour meeting Quebec government ministers viewed a trailer from a film documentary which Makivik commissioned to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

That was followed by a presentation of key elements of the Parnasimautik Report, along with its priorities for action, which were followed by a general discussion with the ministers.

"The voices of the Inuit have been heard and culminated in a report that is a blueprint for the future. Nunavik Inuit are ready to shape our Parnasimautik vision into reality. Governments and industry must be prepared to commit and act as true partners," Makivik President Jobie Tukkiapik was quoted as saying in the release.

At the Quebec City presentation: the members of Parnasimautilirijiit which includes the presidents of the regional organizations in Nunavik — Makivik, the KRG, Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, Avataq Cultural Institute, Kativik School Board, Nunavik Landholding Corporations Association, and the Nunavik Youth Forum.

They were accompanied by Adamie-Delisle Alaku, Makivik Vice President of Makivik and a board member on the Société du Plan Nord, the corporation which is overseeing Quebec northern development under Plan Nord.

In 2014, the new Liberal government in Quebec [took steps to revive the Plan Nord](#), as its blueprint for development above Quebec's 49th parallel.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavik_leaders_share_regions_plan_for_the_future_in_quebec/

Two B.C. First Nations seek stop-work order on Site C dam

By Tamsyn Burgmann, The Canadian Press August 19, 2015



The Site C dam would flood an 83-kilometre stretch of the Peace River valley between Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope.

VANCOUVER — Two northeastern British Columbia First Nations will suffer "irreparable harm" if thousands of hectares of old-growth forest are cleared to build the Site C dam, their lawyer says.

John Gailus told B.C. Supreme Court that a stop-work order should be issued to halt the first phase of the nearly \$9-billion hydroelectric project from proceeding along the Peace River.

He said the Crown granted permits for the preparatory phase of construction without consulting with the West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations, which are members of the Treaty 8 Tribal Alliance.

"The Crown truncated their consultation and issued the permits to meet an arbitrary timeline imposed by B.C. Hydro, we say, contrary to both its contractual obligations and its constitutional obligations," Gailus said Tuesday.

The injunction application comes as the First Nations wait for both B.C. Supreme Court and Federal Court to deliver decisions on a judicial review aimed at quashing the hydroelectric project entirely.

The provincial government granted approval in July for the first of seven construction phases, although the work hasn't yet started.

Court heard the permits authorize the clearing of more than 1,600 hectares of forest, equivalent to about 4,500 truckloads of timber, along the south bank of the Peace River.

Construction of new access roads and bridges, expansion of quarries and removal of beaver dams, eagle nests and the alteration of 163 archeological sites — which may include burial sites — was also authorized, Gailus said.

He told court there's no urgency for starting the project.

"There are significant benefits to the B.C. taxpayers for a delay," he said, adding costs will be higher if the work is allowed to move ahead and then the project is overturned.

Outside court, West Moberly Chief Roland Willson called the consultation process a "farce."

He said the First Nations signed an agreement in April to consult with the province on the first phase, but B.C. Hydro's permits were approved before any meetings.

Willson was particularly concerned that up to 28 eagle nests would be destroyed.

"It doesn't mean anything to anybody if we don't even talk about it and they approve (the permits)," he said. "We actually have to sit down and work through them together."

Last month, Forests Minister Steve Thomson said each of the two dozen approved permit applications was reviewed for its potential impact on the environment and on aboriginal treaty rights.

Thomson said the province conducted an "appropriate consultation process."

B.C. Hydro expects construction of Site C to take at least a decade. The utility has said the project will power the equivalent of 450,000 homes per year.

Direct Link:

<http://www.theprovince.com/technology/First+Nations+seek+stop+work+order+Site/11300588/story.html>

McMurray Métis passes as a historical, rights-based community, argues report

By [Vincent McDermott](#)

Monday, August 17, 2015 5:42:11 MDT PM



A Métis fisherman helps Fish and Wildlife officers sort fish into piles at Gregoire Lake. Officers confiscated 32 fish caught using a net without a commercial fishing license in Fort McMurray Alta. on Saturday February 7, 2015. The catch was a protest from fishermen arguing they had a cultural right to harvest the area. Vincent McDermott/Fort McMurray Today

If Alberta recognizes the McMurray Métis as a historic community, then the 300 members of the local will not only be eligible for the same hunting and trapping rights other Métis communities enjoy, but make it mandatory for oil and gas companies to consult with them.

After pouring through hundreds of historical documents, collecting hours of interviews with elders and analyzing family trees, three researchers have concluded in a report released last Wednesday that the community should be classified as a historic one by the provincial government.

“We looked at 200 oral history interviews and hundreds of pages of archival evidence, we came to the determination the Métis community does indeed meet the conditions,” said Peter Fortna, director of the consulting firm Willow Springs Solutions. The report was also authored by Timothy Clark and Dermot O'Connor.

In 1998, two Métis hunters killed a bull moose outside Sault Ste Marie, Ont. tagging the kill with a Métis card. One week later, Steve and Rod Powley were facing illegal hunting charges. In what became known as the Powley Case, the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously ruled in 2003 that Métis community members have constitutionally protected rights to hunt.

But the ruling has repercussions beyond hunting rights. For the McMurray Métis, becoming recognized as a historical community would require the province and oil and gas companies to consult with them.

The biggest industry challenge the community faces comes from CNRL, [which plans to explore areas near Gregoire Lake for potential future projects](#). The McMurray Métis argue the area is culturally significant, and that by communicating solely through lawyers, CNRL is avoiding consultation. [The regulator says in this case, consultation with the local is not required.](#)

During a July visit to Fort McMurray, Alberta's aboriginal relations minister [Kathleen Ganley told the Today the province was working towards implementing a consultation policy.](#)

"Some companies don't feel they need to consult with the community because it's not recognized," said Fortna. "We're hoping that by recognizing the community, it will trigger consultation with industry."

A Métis community must meet 10 major conditions before Alberta can christen it as a historic and contemporary rights-bearing community. The study focused on the top three conditions.

The first condition is that a community must exist before it came under the "effective control" of European influence, laws and customs. In Fort McMurray's case, researchers found that by 1821, three communities had been established in northeastern Alberta.

The second condition involves genetics. The community must have connections to current Metis communities. Fortna says many members had family ties extending throughout the traditional Métis territory, stretching from the Manitoba-Ontario border region to eastern British Columbia, and the northern United States and Northwest Territories.

The third condition was that members had to still use the land as it was used before. While Fortna says this has been harmed by industrial development, researchers determined hunting, foraging, fishing and teaching customs are still prevalent enough to be considered culturally relevant.

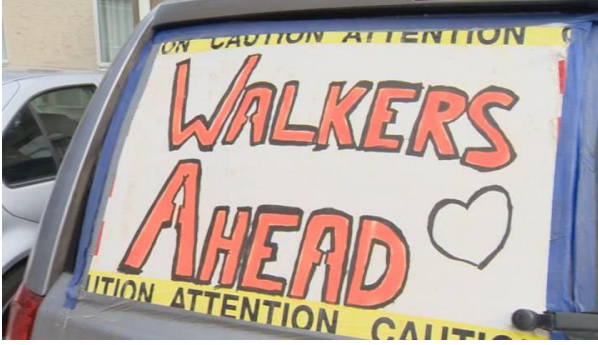
"It is our conclusion the McMurray Métis meet all the requirements in the Powley Test," said Fortna. "Most importantly, if this is passed, it would be positive for a community to recognize where it has come from and where it is going."

Direct Link: <http://www.fortmcmurraytoday.com/2015/08/17/report-arguing-mcmurray-metis-passes-as-a-historical-community-would-make-industry-consultation-mandatory>

Special Topic: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

Walkers call for action on murdered and missing aboriginal women

By [Calvin To](#) Reporter Global News, August 14, 2015 11:20 am



Seven demonstrators are walking across Western Canada to raise awareness of murdered and missing Canadian aboriginal women.

SASKATOON – Seven demonstrators from across Canada stopped in Saskatoon Wednesday as part of their cross-country walk. The group is walking from Winnipeg to Prince Rupert, B.C. as part of an effort to raise awareness of murdered and missing aboriginal women.

The demonstrators were joined in Saskatoon by Saskatchewan Senator Lillian Dyck, who called on the federal government to recognize the plight of Canada's aboriginal women.

"The federal government is doing nothing, they could care less. This should be an election issue. This has to stop, we have to stop harming our aboriginal women," Dyck said.

"It seems like there's no help for us families, we're the ones suffering," said Brenda Osborne, one of the demonstrators.

"And this is why it's so important to us to keep that awareness going all across Canada so people don't give up searching for their loved ones."

The 3,400 km journey has been made possible by volunteers and donations. Most nights they are camping, with some stops in hotels.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2163637/walkers-call-for-action-on-murdered-and-missing-aboriginal-women/>

Drag the Red takes search for missing indigenous women ashore

Members search shorelines 1 year after 15-year-old Tina Fontaine's body pulled from Red River

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 16, 2015 5:54 PM CT Last Updated: Aug 17, 2015 5:50 AM CT



Monday marks the one-year-anniversary of when 15-year-old Tina Fontaine's body was pulled from the Red River.

Her death led to the formation of Drag the Red, a group of volunteers who search the river for clues they hope will help investigators solve cases of missing and murdered indigenous women.

Kim Kostiuk led members of the group that searched along the banks of the river Sunday afternoon.

Kostiuk's 16-year-old daughter Becky Kostiuk was murdered in 2000 after attending a party.



Volunteers with Drag the Red searched along the banks of the Red River near the Disraeli Bridge in Winnipeg on Sunday. (CBC)

"My heart is broken, it will never mend. I miss her so much," said Kostiuk, adding she struggled with depression and tried to commit suicide 13 times after her daughter's death.

"I didn't care about life anymore, didn't want to live. I wanted to die and I wanted to be with her."

Kostiuk credited her family and friends with helping her pull through what she described as the toughest time of her life.

Kostiuk drew strength from her daughter's death. It motivated her to get involved with Drag the Red and help others with missing loved ones attempt to find closure.

She led a group on a ground search on Sunday to commemorate the day Fontaine's body was pulled out of the Red River last summer.

Volunteers like Tasha Benjamin swept the tall grass and shrubs along shorelines of the river around the Disraeli Bridge during the Sunday search.

She said the circumstances surrounding Fontaine's death broke her heart.

"Ever since the Tina Fontaine incident, ever since she was found, I think as a community we need to come out here. If we don't, who will?" said Benjamin.

Kostiuk said the ground search looks for items like wrist ties and clothing, and anything else that might be associated with a crime scene.

She said she hopes they find items that help advance police investigations, adding she doesn't plan to stop searching anytime soon.

"You can't ... rest until you have something to prove it's them, if they are alive or gone. I do it because this is what I'm meant to do."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/drag-the-red-takes-search-for-missing-indigenous-women-ashore-1.3193102>

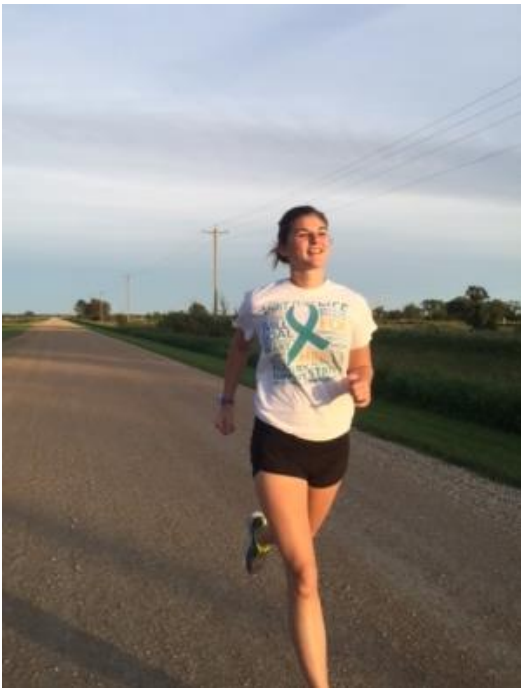
Manitoba teen runs 100 km for missing, murdered indigenous women

'You don't have to be in a bad place to go missing; it can happen to anyone,' says Tracie Leost, 16

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 19, 2015 5:15 AM CT Last Updated: Aug 19, 2015 4:20 PM CT



A Manitoba teen plans to run more than 100 kilometres over the next four days in hopes of raising awareness for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.



Tracie Leost, 16, is running from Oak Point, Man. to The Forks in Winnipeg to raise awareness about missing and murdered indigenous women.

Tracie Leost, 16, gets her "Journey of Hope" run underway in the Lake Manitoba community of Oak Point Wednesday morning. From there, she will head southeast to Winnipeg.

The competitive runner said she was motivated to make the journey as a way of drawing attention to an important issue she feels needs to be addressed.

"You can go missing anywhere, and I mean if that happened to me than I would want as many people helping," said Leost. "You don't have to be in a bad place to go missing. It can happen to anyone, anywhere."

Leost said she hopes to inspire others to follow in her foot steps.

"Being the first person who I know of to do something, I guess this drastic, opens up a pathway that a lot of other people can do similar things, so it gives other people opportunities."

Leost plans to finish her run at the missing and murdered indigenous women monument at The Forks on Saturday.

Leost is also raising money for the Families First Foundation, an organization that helps the families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

"I have the message in my head that I know what I'm doing is right, and that's enough for me."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-teen-runs-100-km-for-missing-murdered-indigenous-women-1.3195744>

Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations

Inside Marty Stuart's Forgotten Native American Opus 'Badlands'

Ten years since its release, Stuart's musical tribute to the Lakota Sioux is as poignant as ever

By [Michael Streissguth](#) August 14, 2015



Marty Stuart accepts the Lifetime Achievement Award for Performance at the Americana Honors in 2005, the same year his Native American tribute 'Badlands' was released. Rick Diamond/WireImage

When he hits the road this fall, Marty Stuart will take a few minutes to tell the story of *Badlands: Ballads of the Lakota*, his daring concept album about the Lakota Sioux, released 10 years ago this October. It's a decidedly under-the-radar release, and no doubt some fans who have never heard the album will arch their eyebrows when Stuart lights into [the title track](#). But the project holds a special place in the singer-songwriter's catalog — and stands as one of the best overlooked records of the past decade.

In an industry that often sidesteps political controversy in favor of shopworn sentiments set in the beds of pick-up trucks, *Badlands* delivers caustic observations on the U.S. government's attempted obliteration of Lakota culture in the 19th century and the hopelessness that plagues the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota where many Lakota people live.

Scan a list of the top country hits from 2005 — like Brad Paisley's "[Alcohol](#)," Gretchen Wilson's "All Jacked Up" and Neal McCoy's "Billy's Got His Beer Goggles On" — and it's easy to understand the uniqueness of *Badlands*. Like Paisley and company, Stuart has recorded his share of party and drinking songs over the years — "The Whiskey Ain't Workin'" and "Honky Tonkin's What I Do Best" (both with Travis Tritt) among them — but in 2005 he attempted to draw Native American issues back into the national dialogue.

Back then, country music's closest visible connection to native peoples was the concerts its artists played at Indian-controlled casinos. But "Casino," a sobering track on *Badlands*, calls out those gaming halls and the empty salvation they offer Native Americans: "They built a casino out under the stars/With neon lights blinking on tired rusty cars/Card sharks take my money, whiskey puts me in jail/An oasis of misery, I know it so well."

Stuart reimagined [Johnny Cash](#)'s obscure "Big Foot" (the only cover on *Badlands*) to indict the Seventh Cavalry's attack on the Lakota at Wounded Knee in 1890, but in "Broken Promised Land" — with its phantasmagorical instrumental prelude — he unleashes his own venom at President Bill Clinton, a modern great white father, who arrived in Pine Ridge in 1999 with retreaded solutions to the reservation's problems. "He brought with him from Washington/A bag filled with dreams and cake/To spread among the poor/In the poorest county in the whole United States," sings Stuart.

"I can't help but get angry," Stuart tells *Rolling Stone Country*. "If you and I were to get in our cars and drive out there we would find 14 people living in a house trailer, people without money for medicine and a lot of that kind of discouragement. It's not glamorous up there. Our original people always wind up at the end of the line."

Despite the album's almost certain commercial failure, Stuart intrepidly moved forward with *Badlands*' release.

Indeed, the champion of traditional country is nothing if not ambitious. A child prodigy on the mandolin when bluegrass legend Lester Flatt brought him to Nashville in 1972, the youngster unabashedly courted the men and women who defined country music. Upon Flatt's death in 1979, Stuart joined Doc Watson's band, but all the while kept his eye on Johnny Cash.



Courtesy Universal

Later in the year, Cash hired the young face with flashy talent to enliven his flagging road show. The heady new gig linked him to the gods of country music — Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, Waylon Jennings — not to mention Cash himself, whose well-known concept albums inspired him.

Not long after Stuart's first live show with the Man in Black, the band played a benefit at Pine Ridge. "That's when I fell in love with the Lakota people," says Stuart.

He also met John L. Smith, the Cash discographer and friend and chronicler of the Lakota, who taught him about Native American culture and history. In 1995, after many visits to the reservation with Smith, he began forming the narrative that would become *Badlands*.

"Walking Through the Prayers," one of the first songs he wrote for the album, grew out of a visit to the sacred Bear Butte in South Dakota. "I went back up there, and I would

check my songs by way of the landscape. I would check my songs by way of the people," relates Stuart.

By the mid-Nineties, Stuart had his own major recording contract, but his dream of an entire album about Native Americans remained on hold in favor of his top-selling mainstream albums that imbricated playful hillbilly hits over country music anthems such as "Let There Be Country" and "The King of Dixie." His momentum faltered in 1999 when *The Pilgrim*, a concept album that earnestly though awkwardly distilled country music's themes and traditions, floundered on the charts.

Nursing the rejection, Stuart retreated from the spotlight. He scored a Hollywood film, coached the ailing Cash through the final chapter of his recording career and spent time with his second wife, 1960s country queen Connie Smith, whom he married in 1997.

When he reemerged in 2003, Stuart often dressed in black as if in mourning for Cash, who had [died that same year](#), and he spoke with humility about a recent DWI arrest. But his ambition still burned. Boasting a new band that featured brooding guitar genius Kenny Vaughan and veteran session drummer and vocalist Harry Stinson, he released three albums in the space of 13 months: *Souls' Chapel*, *Badlands* and *Live at the Ryman*, in addition to 2003's *Country Music*.

Badlands radiated the aura of Cash, who had recorded his own album on the plight of the American Indian entitled *Bitter Tears* in 1964 (the album [recently received the tribute treatment](#)) and spoke out on Native American issues as fervently as he had on prison reform. "It seemed to be the way I processed his death, as much as anything," says Stuart. "I felt like John was looking down on us. I felt like American history was looking down, and all those elders — the people who had gone on before — were looking down."



Marty Stuart performs with Johnny Cash on 'The Tonight Show' in 1997. NBC/NBCUniversal

Badland's release in 2005 found Stuart still chasing the big statement, but he had finally mastered the physics of the concept album. Unlike *The Pilgrim*, the new set offered taut messages and riveting musical arrangements of rock, folk, country and Native American music.

Although his voice could never match the gravitas in Cash's, he nonetheless sang like a preacher with the devil on his back. "You understand that he really believes what he's saying here," says Joan Kornblith, a radio disc jockey based in Washington, D.C., who has often given airtime to Stuart's music. "It's not fake. It's authentic."

But the collection tripped over itself in search of an audience. The narrative occasionally stalled, as in the six-minute "Walking Through the Prayers" and the dull "So You Want to Be an Indian." And like many concept albums, the record lacked a radio-friendly single. "On commercial radio you have to appeal to the widest net and this does not do that," says Kornblith. "This appeals to a certain type of person. You have to have an interest in the world around you, either know something about it or be curious."

Only Stuart's devoted fans bought the album. "I knew that it didn't stand a chance commercially, but I knew spiritually it was the right record to make," he says. "The story needed to be told."

Long out of print in its physical form, *Badlands'* legacy remains tangible, bearing rare witness to country music's power to ring the bell of social justice, as it has over the years in songs and albums about prisons, the demise of the family farm and the working-class experience. But because social justice rarely sells in the millions, Stuart's record seems destined to drift, collecting its faithful audience one person at a time.

Kenny Bohling of Sevierville, Tennessee, is one of the faithful. An upstate New York native, he was playing banjo for a living in 2005 when his local radio station cued up ["Three Chiefs,"](#) *Badlands'* stirring dream sequence about Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull and Red Cloud meeting God. "By the time the song was all the way over, I was crying like a two-year-old," explains Bohling. "I don't even have words to describe the toll it took. I became obsessed with trying to help out. I became obsessed with finding out all I could about the reservation, about the poverty, about the government, about everything about the entire situation."

After he learned of the winter deaths on the reservation due to hypothermia, he began driving to South Dakota with loads of used blankets donated by East Tennessee hotels. Then he got serious, starting a leather-goods company that employed Lakota workers to make straps for guitars, banjos and mandolins. Today, at least five people in Pine Ridge earn full-time wages at the work that *Badlands* inspired, and dozens of other Lakota people work part-time for Bohling.

"That would earn you a knighthood in some countries," observes Kornblith. "Conversely, if the album made one person pick up a book and learn about those people, it's done its

job. If it made somebody stop to think that maybe we have not always treated indigenous people correctly, it's done its job. Marty should be very pleased."

Read more: <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/inside-marty-stuarts-forgotten-native-american-opus-badlands-20150814#ixzz3j5fmITCJ>

How Indian Are You? Ramapough Have Their Say in 'American Native'

[Tish Leizens](#)

8/13/15

At the core of the [award-winning documentary film *American Native*](#), which will show in selected cinemas in New York and New Jersey in September, are stirring questions that have been asked of Natives time and again: Are you an Indian? How Indian are you?

These questions have long been directed at the Ramapough Lenape Indians, a group based 30 miles away from New York City. They have struggled to establish their Native identity due to racial mixing and a lingering urban legend that refers to them as "Jackson Whites," a pejorative term that refers to their heritage as a blend of Black and White races.

"I'm an Indian," says Tribal chief Dwaine Perry at one point in the film. "How much of an Indian are you?"

"What is your BIA number?" asks another member of the Tribe. Interview subjects include Tribal elders, historians, a folklorist, an anthropologist, lawyers and The Delaware Nation President Kerry Holton.

The documentary has been well received. It won the Best Documentary Feature in the Manchester International Film Festival 2015. It has been nominated twice in St. Tropez Film Festival and is up for an award in the forthcoming Harlem International Film Festival.

The film is also being released in theaters through [Gathr, an on-demand theatrical distribution crowdsourcing site](#).

In 1980, the New Jersey legislature recognized the tribe as Ramapo Lenape Nation but its members' efforts to be federally recognized have for decades been thwarted because of inadequate historical documentation proving their bloodlines and cultural traditions.

"Identity comes from within, and no one person, group or organization should dictate another person's identity," said Corey Bobker, a non-Native producer who was born and

raised some 20 minutes away from the Ramapo Mountains. "You are who you think you are."

Yet for the Ramapough, it's not that simple. How does one misunderstood tribe, numbering some 5,000 members and residing in some affluent communities in Bergen and Passaic counties in New Jersey and Rockland County in New York, preserve their cultural heritage?

Chief Perry's response in the film—after showing instances of friction in the community—resonates with his members. "It is about the Native people in this country," he says. "It is about the Ramapos being treated as dirt bags like these people have been doing for the last 200 to 300 years."

In the Native world, the film sheds light on the benefits of a federally-recognized Lenapes versus the Ramapough have-nots, with Holton talking about the thriving enterprises of the tribe that relocated to Oklahoma.



Steven Oritt, American Native film director, at work. Photo courtesy American Native

"The film is a look at modern American Indian identity and the legal, social and cultural definitions of the term 'Native American,'" said director Steven Oritt. He said he wanted Natives to gain insight as to life experiences of a non-federally recognized tribe in contrast to a larger federally recognized one.

"We hope people get a sense of family after this film. The one thing you can't deny is that the Ramapough are the oldest family in New Jersey, maybe even in the country. Watching them interact, support each other and their cause inspires love and feeling of togetherness that can only be achieved through a familial bond," said Bobker.

The film begins and ends along the same lines. "I made a promise to myself that before I have a family and a wife and kids I know my culture inside and out," said a young tribal member. The future is at stake.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/08/13/how-indian-are-you-ramapough-have-their-say-american-native-161381>

One of the racial minorities most likely to be killed by police is also the most overlooked

[Tara Houska](#)

August 14, 2015

Ma-hi-vist Goodblanket. Corey Kanosh. Allen Locke. Paul Castaway. Sarah Lee Circle Bear. Do any of these names sound familiar? Those are just some of the names of Native Americans who recently lost their lives upon encountering police.

Case in point: On July 12, Denver police fatally shot 35-year-old Paul Castaway, a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, four times. According to law enforcement, Castaway had stabbed his mother in the neck and was “[dangerously close](#)” when he was shot. Surveillance footage and eyewitnesses told a different tale, however.

Paul Castaway’s mother, Lynn Eagle Feather, said she called 911 asking for help with her mentally ill son. A [security camera showed](#) Castaway holding a knife to his own neck when officers opened fire. Witnesses said his final words were “What’s wrong with you guys?” Eagle Feather says she now regrets calling the police.

Just a few weeks earlier, Cheyenne River Sioux tribal member Sarah Lee Circle Bear, a 24-year-old mother of two who was [allegedly pregnant](#), died in a [South Dakota holding cell](#). Witnesses said Circle Bear pleaded with jailers and told them she was in excruciating abdominal pain. According to media accounts, her calls were met with callous skepticism. She was found unresponsive hours later and pronounced dead on arrival to a nearby hospital.

There are no nationwide rallies for Native American justice, no presidential commentary, no around-the-clock coverage. These stories bear similarities to the narrative of police brutality and questionable deaths that has dominated the news as of late. Yet, aside from small protests organized and attended by Native Americans, these injustices are largely unheard by the greater public. There are no nationwide rallies for justice, no presidential commentary, no around-the-clock coverage.

Last August, the Center on Juvenile Justice and Criminal Justice reported that despite being less than 2% of the US population, Native Americans are the [most likely racial group](#) to be killed by law enforcement. This fact is often overlooked in stories referencing violence against people of color—the conversation is largely a black and white binary, and even that binary is often denied and suppressed. “All Lives Matter” comes to mind.

Sadly, for Native America being overlooked is nothing new. Our voices are seldom in the mainstream, our issues disregarded. Native media and alternative media are frequently our only platforms, with the [rare article](#) reaching a wider audience.

One of the biggest stories to finally percolate into the public consciousness came through the Washington football team name controversy. And yet even there Native erasure was apparent, as we saw decades of protests and lawsuits against the Washington team turned into a “liberal PC crusade.” The few Natives featured in mainstream media were painted as fringe activists, and told there were “more important things to worry about.

A country actively engaged in taking down confederate flags and denouncing symbols of racism remains lukewarm—if not downright celebratory—of the dehumanization and racial caricaturing of Native Americans because well, that’s different. Never mind that Native Americans are statistically [far more likely](#) to be the victims of a hate crime than any other racial group besides African Americans.

Truth be told, many Americans remain unaware of the indigenous peoples living in their midst. According to the schoolbooks, our communities disappeared with the onset of Manifest Destiny.

Our very existence is an affront to American exceptionalism—best that we remain static noble warriors. Our very existence is an affront to American exceptionalism—best that we remain static noble warriors, not modern peoples living with the effects of attempted eradication, intergenerational trauma, and ongoing disparities across the board.

Thanks largely to a jurisprudence that continues to whittle away at tribal sovereignty and rights reserved to us through treaties, our communities are almost entirely without authority to prosecute non-Native criminals on reservations.

Imagine, if you will, being told an out-of-state offender is exempt from jurisdiction, that all law enforcement can do is escort them to state lines. That’s our reality.

The federal government holds prosecution power on reservations, but its declination rate [hovers around 35%](#). Native American women are [2.5 times more likely](#) to be the victim of a violent crime and [one in three Native women](#) will be raped in her lifetime. Roughly 70% of the offenders will be non-Native. Most will walk.

That’s just a small sampling of the many unseen ways Native Americans are disparately treated by the American justice system. The deaths of Paul Castaway and Sarah Lee Circle Bear merit investigation, but it appears unlikely to happen without national pressure. Charges have yet to be filed in either incident.

America’s original people are tired of our seemingly invisible status. This is an opportunity for Americans everywhere to stand together with the smallest minority population, to demonstrate that “justice for all” is truly a tenet of American society.

Native lives matter.

Direct Link: <http://qz.com/478483/one-of-the-racial-minorities-most-likely-to-be-killed-by-police-is-also-the-most-overlooked/>

Federal lawsuit filed to block Native Hawaiian election

[By Susan Essoyan](#)

POSTED: 11:32 a.m. HST, Aug 13, 2015

LAST UPDATED: 12:39 p.m. HST, Aug 13, 2015



Renwick "Uncle Joe" Tassill spoke during a public meeting held by the U.S. Department of the Interior in June 2014 at Nanaikapono Elementary School in Waianae. The department scheduled a series of meetings in Hawaii and Native American communities on the mainland to solicit comments and feedback on whether and how the process of reestablishing a government-to-government relationship with Native Hawaiians should move forward.

Four Native Hawaiians and two non-Hawaiians filed a lawsuit Thursday in U.S. District Court in Honolulu seeking to block a “race-based” and “viewpoint-based” election planned this fall as a step toward establishing a sovereign Hawaiian government.

The lawsuit, which was filed against the state of Hawaii, Office of Hawaiian Affairs trustees and other “agents of the state,” argues that the election violates the U.S. Constitution and the Voting Rights Act by using race and political qualifications to determine voter eligibility.

The Native Hawaiian Roll Commission recently published a list of 95,000 Native Hawaiians eligible to vote for delegates later this year to a governance aha, or

constitutional convention to be held next year. The election is being overseen by an independent group, Na‘i Aupuni, which is funded by OHA grants through the Akamai Foundation.

The plaintiffs in the lawsuit are Keli‘i Akina, Kealii Makekahu, Joseph Kent, Yoshimasa Sean Mitsui, Pedro Kana‘e Gaudio and Melissa Leina‘ala Moniz. They are represented by Michael Lilly, a former state attorney general, who brought the suit on behalf of Judicial Watch, a nonprofit.

According to the suit, Akina and Makekahu, both Native Hawaiian, are excluded from the roll because they cannot affirm the political declaration required for registration. Along with proving Native Hawaiian ancestry, registrants must “affirm the unrelinquished sovereignty of the Native Hawaiian people and my intent to participate in the process of self-governance.”

Gaudio and Moniz contend they were registered on the Native Hawaiian Roll without their consent. Kent and Mitsui say they were racially discriminated against when excluded from the roll because of race.

All six are Hawaii residents, except Moniz, who lives in Texas.

The Native Hawaiian Roll Commission launched its registry campaign in 2012, under a law passed the year before that aimed to identify and certify Native Hawaiians in order to facilitate their self-governance. The commission signed up more than 40,000 people, and also incorporated names from previous Native Hawaiian registries.

The defendants named in the suit are the state of Hawaii, Gov. David Ige; OHA trustees; Native Hawaiian Roll commissioners and their executive director, all in their official capacity; the Akamai Foundation and the Na‘i Aupuni Foundation.

“This lawsuit is about preserving the Aloha Spirit and the unity of all people in Hawaii,” said Akina, a plaintiff and president of the Grassroot Institute of Hawaii. “Instead of OHA and the State continuing to waste millions of dollars on the pursuit of a political sovereignty campaign, they need to use these precious funds to meet the real needs of Hawaiians for housing, jobs, education, and health care.”

“Who would believe that in this day and age U.S. citizens are being denied access to the right to vote explicitly because of their race and their points of view?” said Tom Fitton, president of Judicial Watch.

Direct Link:

http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/20150813_Federal_lawsuit_files_to_block_Native_Hawaiian_election.html?id=321814401

Santa Fe vineyard owner defends 'offensive' Facebook post

By [Madeline Schmitt](#) Published: August 13, 2015, 5:48 pm Updated: August 14, 2015, 9:53 am

SANTA FE (KRQE) – A vineyard owner is defending a post she shared on her business' Facebook page earlier this week that has some people riled up.

"We are very, very proud of our heritage, both our Native American heritage, our Spanish Heritage," Eileen Reinders said.

Reinders has owned Estrella del Norte Vineyard, a winery north of Santa Fe, just south of Espanola, since 2007. The business is named for her great, great grandmother, who was Ute.

She promotes her business on a Facebook page filled with grapes, vines and bottles. Sometimes she shares posts to the page.

"I was going through Facebook and someone posted about 'My Indian Name Is Run with Wine,'" Reinders said.

On Monday, Reinders shared a picture depicting a Native American holding a wine bottle. The picture has text on it that reads "My Indian Name Is Runs with Wine."



"So when I saw that, I thought 'Gosh I used to run, and also we're in the wine business, and I'm Native American,'" she said. "I mean it was me. It was personal to me."

Not everyone saw it that way. Some people found it offensive, making fun of Native American names and perpetuating stereotypes, and asked her to take it down.

Reinders removed it, but was left stunned and confused at the situation.

KRQE News 13 showed it to a few people, who reacted.

At first glance, Pojoaque resident Janet Ortiz thought the Indian name was “cute,” because her granddaughter gave her the name “Walks with Fists” years ago. Upon closer look, she changed her mind when she saw the word “wine.”

“I didn’t like it because it connotes something different, almost associates wine with Native Americans and not in a good way,” Janet Ortiz said.

“It’s just promoting the drinking more,” Espanola resident, Sharron Nuttall said.

Nuttall said drinking is a big problem in the area and that the picture is attacking the Native American population.

Reinders took to Facebook to make an apology if she offended anyone, but says she just doesn’t see it that way.

“I’m sad for them because that’s their negative perception,” she said. “This was not meant to offend anybody, this was about myself.”

Direct Link: <http://krqe.com/2015/08/13/vineyard-owner-defends-facebook-post-seen-as-offensive/>

Native Americans Most Likely Victims of Deadly Police Force



Lynn Eagle Feather, mother of police shooting victim Paul Castaway, is consoled by friends at rally in Denver, Co., July 12, 2015. (Courtesy/Steve Stalze)

Cecily Hilleary

Last updated on: August 15, 2015 6:50 AM

The high-profile shooting of an unarmed teen in Ferguson, Missouri last year focused international attention on police using deadly force against African Americans.

But another minority group in the U.S. — Native Americans — also claims they are frequently subjected to excessive force by police, and recent incidents and protests are drawing attention to their cause.

Three Native Americans are reported to have died during arrest or confinement last month.

One of them was Denver resident [Paul Castaway](#), a 35-year-old Lakota Indian with a history of mental illness and alcohol abuse.

“He recently lost his job and he was devastated,” said his mother, Lynn Eagle Feather. On July 12, he returned home from an outing in a state of high agitation and began waving a knife.

She had seen him upset before, but nothing like this day, she said. Frightened, she fled her apartment, her two young grandchildren in tow, and called the police for help.

“I told them, ‘He’s schizophrenic, he’s very angry,’” she said in an interview with VOA.



Paul Castaway, Lakota Native victim of police shooting July 12, 2015. His mother said this photo was taken "in happier times." (Courtesy/Lynn Eagle Feather)

Police found Castaway, armed with the knife, in a nearby trailer park and gave chase.

“There were about 18 children playing in the parking lot and they were running alongside of my son as the police were chasing him,” his mother said.

She says after Castaway came to a dead end, he ran back into the open street and stopped along a wooden fence. That’s when one of the officers approached him, took aim and fired.

After he fell, Eagle Feather said the officers rolled him over and handcuffed him.

“And he looked at them and said, ‘What’s wrong with you guys?’ That’s the last words that came out of his mouth,” she said.

Denver police officials say Castaway had threatened the officers with his knife. But according to Eagle Feather and a [local television report](#), surveillance footage showed that Castaway had been holding the knife to his own neck.

The Denver Police department did not respond to telephone and email requests from VOA for comment on the Castaway shooting. The [officer involved](#) has been removed from active duty, pending an investigation.

Meanwhile, the department has recently completed a [major reshuffling](#) of police personnel, citing “complacency” throughout the ranks.

This comes as little consolation to Castaway’s mother, who is looking for answers.

“My son was only a threat to himself,” she said.

She also worries about neighborhood children who witnessed his shooting, including one boy who fainted on the scene.

“He has to go to counseling because he can’t get it out of his head,” Eagle Feather said. “And some of the children are saying that they see my son sometimes, early in the morning, standing there along the fence with his head down.”

Native Americans vulnerable

The United States is home to 565 officially-recognized Indian tribes and other indigenous communities. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, American natives make up less than one percent of the U.S. population.

But Native Americans are victims in nearly two percent of police killings — which makes them statistically more vulnerable to police violence than blacks, according to the [Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice](#).

Jonathan Blanks, a researcher at the Washington, DC-based CATO Institute, who edits [policemisconduct.com](#), a website that tracks a wide variety of alleged police wrongdoing, says information can be difficult to access.

“The Federal government asks for data on the use of force by law enforcement, but local police agencies aren’t necessarily compliant,” Blank said. “And in some cases, state laws actually prevent police departments from releasing information to the public.”

The FBI publishes data on law enforcement personnel who have been assaulted or [killed in the line of duty](#), as well as cases of [justifiable homicide](#) by police. The reports are based on data from 18,000 local and federal law enforcement agencies who voluntarily participate in the program.

But a 2014 [Wall Street Journal](#) study of data from more than 100 of America's largest police agencies found that more than 550 cases of homicide by police between 2007 and 2012 were not included in the FBI data.

The lack of accurate statistics on police violence led D. Brian Burghart, a Reno, Nevada, journalist, to create [fatalencounters.org](#), a site which charts arrest-related deaths every U.S. state.

“We track any manner of deaths — gunshot, Taser, vehicular accidents — anything outside of the jail,” Burghart said. “Unless incidents are reported in the media, chances are we don’t hear about them. I’ve looked at some 8,000 incidents, and I believe that a lot of them, particularly the Native American deaths, don’t get tracked. It’s a giant black hole. It’s almost lucky when it does hit the press.”

‘We never mattered’



Chase Iron Eyes (Courtesy/Lakota Peoples Law Project)

Chase Iron Eyes, a Native American lawyer and rights activist with [the Lakota People's Law Project](#), based in Rapid City, South Dakota, has launched a [Native Lives Matter](#) campaign. It is patterned after the #BlackLivesMatter movement formed in the wake of race-related riots in Ferguson.

“It’s very unfortunate that black people are being victimized by police,” he said. “But native people are also being victimized by the very system that’s designed to — should be designed to — protect all Americans,” he said.

“We felt that our voice also needed to be heard and that we needed to deconstruct what we see as a European male-dominated patriarchy and a legal system that was designed to protect European males at the expense of everyone else,” he said.

The controversy is high his home state of South Dakota, where more Native Americans live below the poverty line than in any other U.S. state and where Native Americans are incarcerated at a higher rate than any other race.

While they make up only nine percent of the general population, [they represent 29 percent of North Dakota's prison population](#).

All this, says Iron Eyes, is part of a pattern of [racial discrimination and violence](#) against Indians that dates back generations.

He cites the case of Allen Locke, a native man shot and killed by police in December only a day after he attended a #NativeLivesMatter rally in Rapid City. Police called it a case of “suicide by cop.”

Most recently, in early July, [Sara Lee Circle Bear](#), 24, a Cheyenne River Lakota woman in for a bond violation, complained she was in pain, but was ignored by prison staff who accused her of “faking.” They later found her unconscious in her cell. They transferred her to a nearby hospital, where she was pronounced dead.

Autopsy results issued this week indicated she died from an overdose methamphetamines.

The South Dakota State's Attorney General's Office said it will continue its investigation "as to the source of the methamphetamine."

“There probably will be no follow-up because native lives don’t really matter,” Iron Eyes said.

And they won’t matter, he said, unless stories like hers are brought into the national spotlight.

“Mainstream media that has world wide reach doesn’t usually get the stories that we have because of where we live,” Iron Eyes said. “And if the local or regional media puts a blackout on something, or if the content is detrimental to the image or the reputation of elected officials, like in South Dakota, those kinds of stories don’t get published.”

But Iron Eyes concedes that much of the tension in South Dakota relates back to the August 2011 [shooting of two Rapid City police officers](#) by a young native man who had been stopped for a routine traffic violation.

'No conspiracy'

[Steve Allender](#), mayor and former police chief of Rapid City, acknowledged that there are challenges in providing law-enforcement services to Native American community members.

"Native Americans have been through a great deal of trauma over the past 500 years, largely at the hands of white-skinned settlers. A significant component of today's problems are due in some part to our failure to transition from our roles of the past to roles of the present," he told VOA.

Encounters with police officers, who are mostly white or non-native, can bring many of these frustrations to the surface, Allender said.

"There is no doubt Native Americans are overrepresented in our local judicial systems," he said. "Activists simply claim it's racism, even genocide, but I disagree."

There may be ignorance, he admitted, even insensitivity among some white officials.

"But there is no conspiracy to apply heavy-handed governance to one segment of the population."

Direct Link: <http://www.voanews.com/content/native-americans-most-likely-victims-of-deadly-force-by-police/2918007.html>

Is Bernie Sanders Native Americans' Best Bet for 2016?

As [President Obama prepares to leave office](#), Native Americans hold their breath.

The level of representation and visibility Obama has offered Natives is unprecedented in the history of our federal government. Obama did, after all, establish the first Tribal Nations Conference, where tribes were asked to convene in Washington so they could address the United States government directly.

- The Obamas have visited Native children and [invested in Native American youth](#), and Michelle Obama even made [public statements of apology](#) for the suffering Natives have faced [and continue to face](#) as their lands continue to disappear and their issues continue to be swept under the rug.

Mainstream media rarely reports on it, and there is little money behind it, so it's not likely to become a cause célèbre any time soon, but we should be paying attention to Native issues now more than ever.

Native Americans [are the group most likely to be killed by police](#). More than [one in four Natives lives in poverty](#). Alcoholism, domestic violence, and crime run rampant in reservations across the country.

It is imperative, then, that whoever is put in the White House next is committed to tackling the issues that plague Native communities.

Which is why Bernie Sanders could be Native Americans' best bet for 2016.

A big plus for Natives is that Sanders has consistently been in favor of Native American sovereignty. He believes Natives should have the right to prosecute under their own legal system non-Native persons who commit crimes on reservations.

In keeping with this, he voted in favor of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, which would give tribal governments jurisdiction over domestic violence crimes.

This is incredibly important in the context of domestic violence, as [Native women are some of the most vulnerable to assault](#) in the nation.

He also stands with Native Americans in their opposition to the [Keystone XL Pipeline](#), which would bisect Lakota lands, while Hillary Clinton remains on the fence about the issue.

Sanders voted in favor of Healthcare for Indigenous Peoples, which sought to address issues preventing Natives from obtaining health care.

Talking about the wishes of Native Americans when it comes to the federal government can be tricky. There remain many, of course, who will be skeptical of any American president, and for good reason.

But what remains clear is that the president of the United States can do a lot of good for Native communities. Obama proved that.

And as it stands right now, Bernie Sanders has proven to be the candidate that Natives would stand to benefit the most from if he were to take office.

My hope is that Hillary Clinton, still the most likely nominee for the Democrats in 2016, takes notice of this.

A big part of her campaign message is that she will fight for those who struggle to be heard.

Our indigenous peoples are speaking, and I hope all of our presidential candidates are willing to listen.

Read more: <http://bluenationreview.com/is-bernie-sanders-native-americans-best-bet-for-2016/#ixzz3j6tpwsDb>

Skateboarding On The Reservation

By Ken Shulman

[Comments](#)

August 15, 2015



For some Native Americans living on Indian reservations in the American Southwest, skateboarding is more than just a recreational activity. (Ken Shulman/Only A Game)

Ocean surfers on waves off Malibu and Waikiki show off by “Hanging Ten.” But on Indian reservations in the American Southwest, skateboarders do their best just to hang on. And it isn’t easy. Last year, Ken Shulman spent time with two Apache skateboard teams in Arizona and came back with this report.

This story [originally aired](#) on Aug. 2, 2014. This week it appears again as a part of our ‘[Best Of](#)’ show.

‘Everybody Wants One’

Outside an art opening at an upscale gallery in downtown Phoenix, young men from the San Carlos Apache Reservation did “ollies” and “kickflips” on the walkway. Inside, native artist Doug Miles told the gallery crowd about his paintings. The work’s a cryptic blend of Native American iconography and pop culture — smoke signals from the 21st century rez.



Artist Doug Miles talks about art, skateboarding and the beauty of reservation life. (Ken Shulman/Only A Game)

“Some of you may not ever go to a reservation unless you’re just going to the casino,” Miles said. “But if you go to a casino you may or may not get your money back. But hey, we didn’t really get the country back either, so maybe we’re even.”

Miles paints mainly on found objects: fuel cans, car hoods, panels from a trailer home. But there’s one outlier among the surfaces, a curious artifact that migrated from California to America’s inner cities to the suburbs and, finally, to the reservation: the skateboard. So what’s it doing here?

“It’s really about a father making art for his son,” Miles said. “My son needed a skateboard. I didn’t have enough money. So I painted him one. And then he rode it all around the rez. And I knew what was going to happen. I knew. So when he got home I said, ‘What did everybody say?’ And he said, ‘Dad, Dad, everybody wants one.’”

‘We’re Struggling Here’

Today Miles’ skateboards hang in private collections and museums. Some of them sell for hundreds of dollars. But the former social worker is most proud of [APACHE Skateboards](#) — a skateboard team, shop and artist collaborative he founded on the San Carlos Reservation, about 90 miles east of Phoenix.



A San Carlos skater gets some air in the Phoenix arts district. (Ken Shulman/Only A Game)

Miles said that making skateboards helps his kids connect with their Apache heritage.

“We’ve been making things for centuries as native people,” he explained. “That’s what we do. We could take some obsidian rock and a nice straight stick and make an arrow and hunt for our dinner or fight off marauding white men. “

The San Carlos reservation is a stunning expanse of mountain, high desert and plateau landscapes. But life can be tough here, especially for young people, with few jobs and even fewer distractions. The San Carlos team has a thriving skate park — with colorful murals painted by Miles and his crew. The team also travels to compete against other tribes and against big city skaters. Miles said the travel is mind opening.

“The kids in the South Bronx and the other reservations and East LA, they’re just like our kids,” he said. “These are all communities that are struggling. So when they meet our kids they’re really meeting themselves. And so I think it empowers kids to know that we’re struggling here, too, but we’re also making art and skateboarding and having a lot of fun in the process.

‘We’re Not Doing No Harm’

Skateboarding is popular on reservations throughout the Southwest. But not all of them have skate parks like the one at San Carlos. At the White Mountain Apache Reservation, close to the New Mexico border, skaters have to shimmy through an iron fence to practice in the courtyard of an abandoned high school. The concrete surface is littered with debris and broken glass. Still, the skaters come almost every day.



A white mountain skater with his Four Wheel War Pony. (Ken Shulman/Only A Game)

“Yeah, I think it, like, it keeps them occupied, and, you know, there’s a lot of drinking and a lot of drugs going around here,” said Grant Gatewood, a 24-year-old Apache from White Mountain.

Gatewood likes the freedom of skateboarding: no coaches yelling in his ear, nobody telling him what to do. He thinks skateboarding’s a good thing for native kids who don’t have a lot of other options.

But there are a few folks here who don’t share Gatewood’s enthusiasm. His mother, for one, who doesn’t like seeing him dressed in ratty clothes or paying for his boards and shoes.

“Other than that they have, like, security guards, too — always try to kick us out of spots and stuff, but it’s like we’re not doing no harm,” he said. “I don’t know why they’re getting on us about that.”

The White Mountain team used to have a skate park. But it was ruined, through a combination of benign neglect and, some say, vandalism. Not all the folks at White Mountain dislike skateboarding. But they aren’t all warm and fuzzy either. Part of the chill comes from the sport’s outlaw image.

“When I was kid in the ‘80s, you always saw during Nancy Reagan’s “Just Say No” to drugs campaign, it was always the skateboarder in, you know, some urban playground that was coming up to little kids trying to get them to take drugs or drink,” said [Dustinn Craig](#), a filmmaker and leader of the White Mountain skate team.

More Than Recreation

One day, the White Mountain team held a game of “s-k-a-t-e.” “S-k-a-t-e” is a lot like the basketball game “h-o-r-s-e.” One guy does a trick. If the next guy can’t repeat it, he gets an “S.” When you’ve spelled “skate” you’re out.



Dustinn Craig sets up for the White Mountain game of s-k-a-t-e. (Ken Shulman/Only A Game)

Craig ran down the rules.

“The first round will be traditional skate, only flat-ground tricks, and then the second round is anything goes, rez style,” Craig explained.

The game of skate went by quickly. It was a single-bracket, single-elimination tournament. There were eight skaters, one of whom had ridden his board four miles, mostly downhill, to get there from home. A skater’s wife, two girlfriends and three young boys from the reservation watched from the sidelines. It was a nice way to spend an afternoon in the Arizona mountain air.

But Craig says it’s not just recreation. Kids at White Mountain and other reservations live a harsh reality. Some sink into alcohol. Some spend time in jail. Some are killed in accidents or homicides or take their own lives.

Even dedicated skaters struggle to finish high school and find decent jobs. Skateboarding is strong medicine on the reservation — an edgy sport for kids already living on the edge.

“A lot of the children who really picked up skateboarding, you know, they came from households and homes that were really struggling on many different levels,” Craig said. “It seemed like a lot of the young people who embraced skateboarding fully, it offered them sort of a reprieve from that, you know — something to take their minds off of their environments or whatever was happening at home.

Unlike many Indian tribes, the White Mountain Apache were never resettled. They live on their ancestral homeland — a land rich in sun and water and game. Their proud forbears crossed these lands on horseback. Today these skaters, equally proud, roll over them on their four wheel war ponies — on their skateboards.

“I think skateboarding on the very lands that your ancestors were, you know, existing, before Arizona was a state, before Arizona was even a territory, before the United States was a country, you can’t quantify that,” Craig said. “It’s a sense of place that goes, you know, deeper than blood. It’s like we are made up of this land, you know. It’s fed and sustained our people since time immemorial.”

Direct Link: <http://onlyagame.wbur.org/2015/08/15/native-american-reservation-skateboarding>

Native American anti-mascot rally planned at Saturday's Arizona Cardinal's game

[Megan Finnerty](#), The Republic | [azcentral.com](#) 5:39 p.m. MST August 14, 2015



A coalition of Native American advocates and Arizonans offended at the use of Native imagery and words in pro sports mascots plans to protest Saturday's Arizona Cardinals game against the Kansas City Chiefs outside University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale.

The pre-season game is at 6 p.m. but the group called Arizona to Rally Against Native Mascots will rally at 3 p.m. to raise awareness about the need for respectful representations of indigenous peoples. It is part of an ongoing national effort to raise awareness of how mascots could perpetuate stereotypes.

In 2014, the group rallied against the Cleveland Indians mascot Chief Wahoo outside Chase Field in Phoenix, and against the Washington Redskins and the Kansas City Chiefs, both outside the football stadium.

For decades, Native Americans have been protesting the use of their images and names as mascots, but since Navajo advocate Amanda Blackhorse successfully led a case stripping the Washington NFL team of six of its trademarks in 2014, the conversation has grown louder.

"The NFL and their stakeholders continue to profit off the degradation of the Indigenous identity" said Blackhorse in a statement. Blackhorse is the founder of the group leading the rally Saturday. "We call on the Kansas City Chiefs to end the use of their team name, logo, and any representation of native imagery in their franchise. Native people have been protesting the Kansas City Team and the Washington Team for decades now and they've failed to educate themselves on the harmful effects Native mascots have on Native youth."

As recently as July, a federal judge ordered the Patent and Trademark Office to cancel registration of the Washington Redskins' trademark, ruling that the team name may be disparaging to Native Americans. The ruling affirmed an earlier finding by an administrative appeal board.

Across the country, high school and middle school teams drop Native-themed names and images each week, according to the advocacy organization Eradicating Offensive Native Mascotry. A [2014 story by Five-Thirty-Eight.com](#) counted 2124 U.S. teams with Native-themed names.

The issue with the Native mascots and the backlash against changing them isn't necessarily racism, or a love of sporting tradition. Those who study social change say the issue is that people fear a future of always being misunderstood as bigoted. People fear that one day, there will be no acceptable words left.

Few who refuse to stop using offending language see themselves as racist. Instead, people who want to keep using certain images or words are experiencing what psychologists call cognitive dissonance.

"You don't want to admit it's offensive, or that there's a problem because then you might feel that you're being a racist and that makes you feel bad," said Dawn C. Reid, who has a Masters in psychology and social behavior and runs the life consulting firm Reid Ready Coaching.

"It's easy to project onto the other person that 'I'm not prejudiced. You have the problem because you're the one who feels some way about it. I'm just speaking the way any other American would speak.' Its a way to make yourself feel better about the conversation."

The organizers are emphasizing that theirs will be a peaceful, respectful event and have been working with the police and private security to ensure everyone stays safe.

This is necessary because at some Washington games, Native Americans have been threatened with murder and assault and have had beers and other objects thrown at them. Advocates have been trained to use cellphones to record their experiences.

The Arizona coalition also urges fans to refrain from painting their faces red, wearing costume headdresses or other Native-themed apparel. The coalition is requesting a meeting with Arizona Cardinals management to talk about banning such practices.

The Cardinals could not be reached for comment on deadline. When contacted about the last Native American rally against certain mascots in 2014, the team publicist declined to comment.

Arizona is home to 22 Native American tribes, and is the state with the third-largest Native population, following Oklahoma and California.

Details: 3 p.m. Saturday at Maryland Avenue, between 93rd and 95th avenues. Parking at Raymond S. Kellis High School at 8990 W. Orangetown Ave., Glendale. Free shuttle.

Direct Link: <http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/2015/08/14/native-anti-mascot-group-rally-az-cardinals-game/31742037/>

Intel pledges \$750,000 to help grow pool of Navajo code writers

Posted: Aug 15, 2015 12:22 AM MST

By Shauntae Lymas, Digital/Social Media Content Editor



Jolene Begay, an Intel engineer who is also head of the company's Native American Network, speaks Friday at a ceremony honoring Navajo Code Talkers in Window Rock, Ariz.

SAN FRANCISCO — Seventy years ago today, Japan surrendered to the Allies to conclude World War II. Although the war's end was the result of many factors, few are perhaps as unsung as the contributions of Native American Code Talkers, Navajos who used their unique language as an unbreakable code for military communication.

Timed to honor the day also that celebrates the achievements of those Code Talkers, Intel announced Friday a \$250,000-a-year grant for three years to a trio of Arizona-based Navajo Nation high schools to help their graduates become code writers.

The initiative is part of a broader \$300 million commitment by Intel toward making its 50,000-strong U.S. workforce — which like most tech companies is largely white and male — better represent national demographics.

"We know that if we're really going to fill in the (talent) pipeline, we need to aggressively address the gaps in that talent," says Barbara McAllister, deputy director of Intel's Diversity and Technology Initiative, adding that the funds are in support the recently announced Science Foundation Arizona's Code Talkers to Code Writers Initiative.

Intel currently employs 266 Native Americans, about 0.5% of employees. It also has 1,878 African-Americans (3.5%) and 4,454 Hispanics (8.3%). While for years tech companies were reluctant to share their employee demographics, that trend has been shifting in the face of pressure from both activists such as the Rev. Jess Jackson's Rainbow PUSH Coalition and media outlets such as USA TODAY.

Among the reasons often cited for the lack of diversity at technology firms are a lack of minority engineers graduating from top schools and, at a more fundamental level, a dearth of role models from the computer science world. Critics counter that companies such as Apple and Google should look beyond just top school such as MIT and Stanford for minority talent.

McAllister says that much of the \$250,000 grant — which will go to Chinle, Monument Valley and a third high school to be named later — will be spent on providing teachers with training to teach students coding. In addition, Intel will provide on-site assistance and mentoring by some of its Native American staffers, a few of whom graduated from the high schools receiving the grant.

"It's critical to bring a science and coding curriculum to life, and off project-based learning as opposed to just rote learning," says McAllister.

Direct Link: <http://www.12newsnow.com/story/29793395/intel-pledges-750000-to-help-grow-pool-of-navajo-code-writers>

Fond du Lac Band breaks ground on \$13 million health care project

By [Jana Hollingsworth](#) on Aug 14, 2015 at 10:53 p.m.

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DULUTH, Minn. -- The \$13 million expansion and rebuild of the Center for American Indian Resources in Duluth is the largest single-project investment in native health care made by the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa.

Serving Native Americans in the Duluth community in the same way they are served on the Fond du Lac Reservation is the goal, band Chairwoman Karen Diver said Friday during a groundbreaking ceremony for the project, expected to be finished by next August.

The existing 25,000 square feet on the 200 block of Fourth Street -- opened in 1988 -- will be rebuilt, and 30,000 square feet will be added, along with more parking. The number of employees is expected to grow to 100 from 50, and new services will be added, including "culturally responsive" on-site behavioral health and chemical dependency treatment.

The huge growth of opiate addiction within the area's Native American population means more of those types of services are necessary, Phil Norrgard, the band's director of human services, has said. Patients now travel to the band's Cloquet facilities for such outpatient services, which is expensive and time-consuming.

The center's pharmacy and counseling and case management services also will expand.

The band has come a long way from the "old Indian hospital" run by the federal government on the Fond du Lac Reservation, closed in the 1970s, Diver said. Tribes were then able to tell the federal government they wanted to deliver their own services, and health care was a first pick, she said.

"We saw the scourge that inadequate health care had upon our community; the average age of death in the 1970s was 56," Diver said, making the age of eligibility for elder services 52. "(Elders) are such a precious, precious gift and a tie to who we are as a people. Investing in their wellness and not just treating illness was something that was incredibly important to the band."

Along with the Duluth center, the band has the extensive Min-No-Aya-Win Human Services Center on the reservation -- receiving a smaller expansion -- and a pharmacy in the Twin Cities. The Duluth center is open to Native Americans and up to two generations of their descendants.

Medical and pharmacy services will remain open at the Fourth Street site through construction. Social services and public health have been moved to the nearby Arrowhead Place building, 205 W. Second St., while work is underway.

From a staff perspective, "the anticipation of this project has been years in the making," said Nathan Sandman, an associate director of the human services center. "It's a great investment in Duluth."

The band's executive director, Chuck Walt, recalled downtown's first Native American center -- built decades ago by several groups. His mother, Mary Ann Walt, was a part of that, he said.

"Today, to see this facility coming to fruition here is just really incredible," he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.grandforksherald.com/news/region/3818402-fond-du-lac-band-breaks-ground-13-million-health-care-project>

Looters desecrating state park sites

Cuyamaca Rancho park artifacts being stolen

By [J. Harry Jones](#) | 4:39 p.m. Aug. 14, 2015



State Parks Archaeologist Robin Connors looked at a small grinding hole amidst a site that had more than 40 large ones at a village site inside the Cuyamaca State Park. \ State Parks Archaeologist Robin Connors and Dan Falat, District Superintendent of the Colorado Desert District for the State Park system, which includes Cuyamaca and Anza-Borrego State Parks say that the looting of archaeological sites in the Parks is increasing at an alarming rate, as evidenced by this recent discovery of digging and screening for artifacts at a village site inside the Cuyamaca State Park. Mandatory Credit: JOHN GIBBINS SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE/ZUMA PRESS — *John Gibbins*

CUYAMACA RANCHO STATE PARK — State parks officials and Native American leaders are decrying what they say has been a devastating spate of vandalism and looting at historically and culturally significant sites in San Diego County's backcountry.

At least five times in the past two years, looters have targeted Indian archeological sites within Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, authorities said.

At one site, 21 dig holes were found, each the size of a dinner table.

"I've seen some pretty looted sites across California and that one was one of the worst I've ever seen, and it was one of the first ones we found," said Dan Falat, superintendent of the California State Park's Colorado Desert District, which includes Cuyamaca Rancho, Palomar and Anza-Borrego Desert state parks.



State Parks Archaeologist Robin Connors looked at material that was not taken by looters after they dug the hole at left and screened its contents earlier this year at a village site inside the Cuyamaca State Park. — *John Gibbins*

At another archaeological site, not too far west of state Route 79, the remains of an ancient village had been plundered. That site features a huge slab of granite in which more than 40 bedrock mortars had been dug by generations of Kumeyaay women. Deep and cylindrical, the mortars — used to grind acorns — had been created and handed down over several centuries, with some up to 1,000 years old.

Authorities said that, at some of the locations, they've found shovels, screens, rakes and other tools that looters have used to dig up the earth and sift through soil to uncover arrowheads, other stone projectiles, and potsherds — broken pieces of pottery.

The actions are criminal and in some cases could lead to felony charges of destruction of cultural resources, officials said.



A smoke stained pottery shard, center, lies on top of the ground at a village site in Cuyamaca Rancho State Park.— *John Gibbins*

Archaeologists say the damage is irreversible.

“Once you take it from where it is, it loses its context with the rest of the things that are found,” said park archeologist Robin Connors. “(The artifacts) are all pieces of a puzzle and once you take one piece out, it’s really irritating because you can’t find it again. It’s devastating, just devastating.”

Shasta Gaughen, the historic preservation officer for the Pala Band of Mission Indians, said that, from a cultural standpoint, the destruction is even worse.

“For the Native American communities it’s basically grave robbing because you’re going into a sacred space and taking away the objects that were made by the ancestors,” she said. “Tribes believe those are things that should be left in place and they should be undisturbed. When you’re taking (them), it’s like you’re taking bodies from a cemetery.”



State Parks archaeologist Robin Connors looked at a piece of pottery at a village site inside the Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. State Parks Robin Connors and Dan Falat, District Superintendent of the Colorado Desert District for the State Park system, which includes Cuyamaca and Anza-Borrego State Parks say that the looting of archaeological sites in the parks is increasing at an alarming rate, as evidenced by this recent discovery of digging and screening for artifacts at a village site inside the Cuyamaca State Park. Mandatory Credit: JOHN GIBBINS SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE/ZUMA PRESS — *John Gibbins*

San Diego and Imperial counties are home to four indigenous Native American tribes, with roots going back 12,000 years: the Kumeyaay, Luiseño, Cupeño, and Cahuilla.

Falat said there are hundreds of archeologically rich sites in Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and thousands more in Anza-Borrego, which has also been targeted by looters.

“To me this area of San Diego, from a cultural resources standpoint, is above anything you’d ever find in the state and probably the country,” Falat said.

The five recently looted sites — authorities asked that their specific locations be withheld — were discovered by “site stewards,” park volunteers who routinely check on culturally significant sites, photographing and making reports about each one.

Parks officials said the vandals are probably hobbyists and collectors, rather than fortune hunters looking to sell what they find. Most arrowheads are worth only \$3 to \$5 dollars.

“It’s not a money making venture,” Connors said. “It’s just that people are die-hard collectors.” She cited a case in the 1980s in which a school counselor who had spent years illegally digging for arrowheads in the park was finally identified. In his house authorities found thousands of items, many that he had made into elaborate mosaics.

“There are people who just can’t stop collecting,” she said.

At the same time, the looting is organized and intentional, Connors added.

“It’s not just chance, people randomly stumbling upon things,” she said. “They’re coming up here with tools.”

The park service is employing both high-tech and low-tech methods to try and identify the looters, including surveillance cameras, patrols and other investigative tools, said Falat, the parks superintendent. Park visitors are being encouraged to report any odd behavior they may see.

Depending on the site and what is taken, such thefts could lead to felony charges of destruction of cultural resources, theft of cultural resources, damage to state park land and disturbance of Native American remains.

“I really want people to know that it’s illegal and there are consequences,” Connors said. “It’s not like in the past when boys and girls would go out arrowhead hunting.”

Falat reiterated that, to the Indian community, the sites are irreplaceable.

“In many cases, this is all the history that is left,” he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/2015/aug/14/looters-cuyamaca-park-theft-artifacts/>

Unlocking Maori identity: keeping New Zealand’s indigenous people out of jail

A new program is tackling a sober reality for NZ’s Maori, who make up 15% of the country’s population but half of those behind bars

Saturday 15 August 2015 03.26 BST Last modified on Saturday 15 August 2015 08.17 BST

For the most part Te Ao Mārama looks just like the other low to medium security units at Waikeria prison. Sixty cells surround a central yard on three sides. On the fourth is a dining hall, behind that the meeting areas and offices. The perimeter fence is lined with coils of barbed wire, over which fantails dart back and forth, pecking at the grass.

Here, however, pou whenua (traditional posts) which have been carved by inmates, rise from the ground along with the ageing basketball hoop. Visitors pass through not just the sliding grey security fence, but also the ornate gateway, or waharoa. For the prisoners, the experience is untypical too, with just about every part of the rehabilitative program underpinned by Māori principles, or tikanga Māori.

Te Ao Mārama (World of Light) is one of five units around the country that make up the Te Tirohanga, or Focus, program. Together they represent a small attempt to tackle a huge problem: the alarmingly disproportionate quotient of indigenous people locked up in [New Zealand](#) prisons.

With 8,500 prisoners among a national population of 4.5 million, New Zealand ranks as one of the highest jailers in the developed world. But as has been repeatedly highlighted in reports by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the Māori component is staggering. While those who identify as Māori make up about 15% of the New Zealand

population, the corresponding figure behind bars is more than 50%. Among women, for whom there is no Te Tirohanga option, it is higher still, at 60%.

The most recent data suggests more than six of every 10 Māori prisoners will be back inside within 48 months. At its core, the rehabilitation-focused approach of Te Tirohanga is an attempt to interrupt the tendency for jails to act as recruitment centres for gangs and incubators for further criminality.

“Let me explain it to you like this,” says Jay, leaning his hand on a table covered in flax in the unit’s craft room. “When I got here, I walked in the gates, got a powhiri [formal welcome], and stood up in front of 60 men to tell them where I was from. I couldn’t say that in Māori, so that really made me want to get in touch with my Māori side, learn my whakapapa [ancestry].”

Jay (not his real name), who is nearing the end of the six-phase, 18-month program, says he has gained “a better understanding of things, knowing who my people are, where my mother’s roots lay. Suppose you can’t really go anywhere without knowing where you come from, eh? Sort of just stabbing the dark before I come to this unit. No purpose. Now I’ve got a vision for what I want to do, where I want to be in life.”

It is not exclusive to prisoners with Māori blood. “Any culture can come here and learn, but they learn under the Māori environment,” explains a warden at the unit. One non-Māori, with pale complexion and ginger hair, says he joined the program because he had been living in a Māori community. He had only been at Te Ao Mārama for a few weeks but already it had “changed the way I see things”.

As evinced in the All Black haka, the Air NZ koru or the powhiri for tourists, New Zealand enjoys a popular image of indigenous and settler cultures comfortably integrated. The impact of colonisation is, of course, much more complicated. Numerous breaches by the state of the Treaty of Waitangi, the document signed between the British crown and leaders of iwi, or tribes, in 1840, saw swathes of land, in many cases the traditional tūrangawaewae, or “place to stand”, forcibly taken from Māori. Waves of urbanisation amplified the tendency for generations of Māori to grow distanced from their iwi, language and culture. Part of the ambition of a program such as Te Tirohanga is to restore that cultural link.

“Some of these guys, when they come here, they actually have a very distorted view of what it is to be Māori, and those distorted views often justify offending behaviour,” says Neil Campbell, the director of Māori for the Department of Corrections, citing the work by Māori health academic Sir Mason Durie.

Nowhere are those identity distortions, in Campbell’s terms, more apparent than in gangs, and the scale of affiliation to the Maori-dominated Mongrel Mob and Black Power gangs is inked in tattoos across the men’s bodies at Te Ao Mārama. Such groups have thrived in lower socioeconomic parts of New Zealand, and are widely associated with organised criminality.

“A copybook classic distorted view of being Māori might be, ‘we come from a warrior race, we don’t take any shit from anyone, if I want something I take it’,” says Campbell. “Another distortion might be ‘women from our culture sit down, shut up and don’t say anything – and if they do they get a smack in the face.’”

When prisoners arrive “in an environment like this”, says Campbell, waving his pen above his head, “we turn that distortion around. We actually come from a matriarchal culture that isn’t about suppressing women. In fact, women lead all the events. Men do some of the show-pony stuff, but women are coordinating everything.”

The Te Tirohanga approach emphasises from the outset the involvement of the offender’s whānau in the rehabilitation process, says Campbell. And here whānau means more than the “one-dimensional idea” of family: “it’s not limited to biological relations or even associates, it’s broader than that, and it’s specific about supporting positivity ... we say in environments like this you must include and involve whānau in as many aspects of the intervention as possible.”

That relationship often involves iwi, or tribes, many of which have become increasingly well-equipped and willing to play a role in the rehabilitation process, says Campbell, having agreed settlements with the government over long-standing grievances relating to breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Early results suggest Te Tirohanga, introduced in 2014 to replace its Māori Focus Unit predecessor, is on track to meet or better the overall Corrections department target of a 25% reduction on the 2011 rate of reoffending by 2017, says Campbell.

In pursuing that target, the obvious focus, “whether we like or not”, says Campbell, must be “all these brown people that whakapapa to an iwi somewhere ... If this is such a great program, why are we limiting it to the five whare [units]? Why aren’t we running it in the community? Why don’t women have access to it?”

Marama Fox, co-leader of the government-supporting Māori party has called for a tikanga-based unit to be introduced at Mt Eden Remand prison in Auckland, a facility that has been at the centre of controversy in recent weeks, relating to organised inmate violence, contraband, and the performance of Serco, the UK-based multinational that operates Mt Eden, one of two private prisons in New Zealand.

The minister of corrections, Sam Lotu-Iiga, says that while there are no firm plans to upscale Te Tirohanga, “we are looking at expanding some of the Māori programs. What we’re doing is taking an evidence-based approach to rehabilitation.” Policy, he says, is informed by an “investment approach, which is what taxpayers demand”.

Asked about criticisms by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, which says not enough is being done by the government, Lotu-Iiga insists progress is being made. “I think we’re seeing things change over time. I think we’re seeing education achievement levels for Māori improve over time.”

He points too, to the government's ongoing treaty settlement process. "I'm certainly proud of our record – the number of treaty settlements that we've put through over the last seven years. Certainly, that is something that needs to be addressed; I think most New Zealanders would agree, we're trying to redress some of the grievances that have gone on."

Why are Māori so disproportionately locked up? "The greatest weight of the answer is quite straightforward," comes the answer from a 2008 Corrections report, which attempts to address the "alarming degree" of the imbalance. "Over-representation in the criminal justice system is very much what could be predicted given the combination of individuals' life experiences and circumstances, regardless of ethnicity."

In just about every statistic recording disadvantage – be it unemployment, poverty, health, education or family breakdown – Māori figure disproportionately.

The same report concedes, however, that Māori face a deeper challenge. "Analysis of data, from apprehension through prosecution to conviction and finally sentencing, confirms that Māori are more likely to be apprehended and more severely punished than non-Māori."

While governments have rejected charges of institutional racism, the report acknowledges that Māori face a disadvantage in encounters with police and the judiciary that extends beyond their statistical representation. "At key stages there is evidence of a degree of over-representation that relates to ethnicity," it notes.

In 1988, racial bias in policing and the courts was identified as a crucial factor by lawyer Moana Jackson, who undertook more than two years of research in compiling a report for the NZ justice department, *The Māori and the Criminal Justice System: A new perspective: He Whaipānga Hou*.

One of the central, and certainly the most controversial, recommendations by Jackson was the establishment of a parallel Māori justice system. Geoffrey Palmer, then justice minister in a Labour government, welcomed many of the report's suggestions but remained "totally opposed to the setting up of a separate legal system for Māori", saying, "equality under the law is the greatest hallmark of our legal system and we can't tolerate any departure from it."

Today, Jackson is completing a follow-up to the 1988 report, this time commissioned by his iwi, Ngāti Kahungunu. "Sadly, not a great deal has changed in 25 years," says Jackson in a phone interview.

He believes New Zealand attitudes on crime and punishment have grown tougher, away from "a political belief, and indeed a public belief, in rehabilitation and reform" that existed in the 80s.

“I think there is quite a social shift, a social hardening, around criminal offending,” says Jackson. It stems in part, he argues, from “the ideology of individual responsibility – if you do something wrong you’ve got to get done over. The [introduction of] the private prison is just another manifestation.”

It is impossible to separate, says Jackson, the place of Māori in the prison system from the impact of colonisation, and the disputes around the meaning of the Treaty of Waitangi.

You can’t look at a young Māori man in prison and divorce him from the history of what has happened to our people

“As one kaumatua [elder] said, you can’t look at a young Māori man in Paremoremo prison and divorce him from the history of what has happened to our people. And that is an argument that I’ve always believed – knowing that history and the forces that shape our people’s existence doesn’t excuse the behaviour, particularly of some of our young men, who sometimes do appalling things, but unless we have that context to work from then we can’t make the shifts that are necessary.”

The judiciary has seen one significant Māori innovation in recent years, however, with the introduction of Ngā Kooti Rangatahi, marae-based courts for young Māori. The courts, an adjunct of the youth court system, have grown in number from one in 2008 to 13 in 2015.

Jackson supports the initiative. “While still part of a system that is not Māori, they sit on the marae, they operate according to tikanga, and they work with young offenders across a whole range of areas ... What it does is provide young people who might be in strife with a greater chance of being supported so they don’t get into further strife,” he says.

“It’s still in the experimental stage, there are problems with it, but it does indicate that Māori with the right training and support can reclaim the mechanics, if you like, of dealing with our own people.”

Jackson hopes the Rangatahi courts will ease concerns about the development of a genuinely parallel system. “It shows that it’s possible for Māori to do that, and it can be an exercise of rangatiratanga [sovereignty], and it hasn’t led to the collapse of western civilisation ... Some might say it will make it harder: you’ve already got the Rangatahi courts, you don’t need anything else, but to me it’s just a step, an important step, along the way.”

The justice minister, Amy Adams, is positive about the impact of the Rangatahi courts, noting an encouraging ministry evaluation in 2012 and a fuller, updated assessment due in the next few months. While there are currently no plans to expand the model beyond youth, says Adams, a separate initiative, the Matariki court, based in the district court in Kaikohe, Northland, aims to properly integrate the offender’s whānau, hapū [sub-tribe] and iwi in the process. “The Matariki court has been operating for five years and further

cases are being referred to it, which is indicative of the support and positive outcomes of the program,” she says via a spokesperson.

Jackson notes “the willingness of Māori communities in particular to believe now, which they didn’t believe to the same extent in the 1980s, that they have not only the ability but the right to work in this area and to see change.

“But in the end the fundamental ... exercise of tino rangatiratanga [full sovereignty] prior to 1840 always included necessarily the right to regulate the conduct of the members of iwi and hapū ... That was denied our people after 1840 and the mantra arose that there should be only one law for all, but it was a law that was brought here from somewhere else, and it was never our law.

“While I think progress has been made – I can’t deny that – I think it’s unwise to believe that we’re necessarily at the end of what I call the treaty journey, or even that we’re necessarily doing better than other indigenous peoples.”

If there was ever a time we can start to turn this thing around it’s now

Back at Waikeria, Neil Campbell divines a pivotal moment. “I honestly believe if there was ever a time we can start to turn this thing around it’s now. Right now we’ve got this window of opportunity. If we don’t mobilise now, we’ll miss that, and all these cultural interventions and the like, that we’ve got the momentum up into, that’s probably when my pessimism would come in,” he says.

“If we’re not going to do it now, when there’s a willingness and an eagerness in government, there’s a willingness and eagerness in the highest levels of the organisation, there’s a willingness and eagerness among iwi, then when? It’s one of those times when all the planets have lined up, and you’ve only got so much time until the planets separate. It could be another 30 years before that rolls round again.”

Direct Link: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/15/regaining-maori-identity-and-keeping-them-out-of-new-zealands-jails>

Midway Dispatch: Native American group raises money for families



Members of the Missoula Urban Indian Health Center at their Western Montana Fair food booth.

August 15, 2015 5:30 pm • [KIRA OLIVER Midway Dispatch](#)

The Missoula Urban Indian Health Center is famous for its Indian tacos and homemade fry bread. For more than a decade, this nonprofit organization has been selling Native American food to fairgoers.

“Fry bread is delicious and homemade,” said Kim McLean, an Indian Health Center cook.

Their profits go to fund the clients who come into the Health Center. The Health Center also gives charity donations to other local organizations in need.

Not only do they have delicious food, they help low-income families and students by performing sports physicals, family planning and other health services.

On Tuesday, Aug. 18, starting at 3 p.m., Missoula Urban Indian Health Center is taking part in the annual Back to School Bash, a free event taking place at St. Anthony Catholic Parish in Missoula. They will be providing everything from backpacks to haircuts.

The Western Montana Fair is the biggest fundraiser of the year for the Indian Health Center.

“It’s a great opportunity for someone who has never tasted an Indian taco,” Cheryl Cadotte said.

Direct Link: http://missoulain.com/news/state-and-regional/midway-dispatch-native-american-group-raises-money-for-families/article_23dd0835-e506-5160-81d3-412a254b2c78.html

Powwows are key elements in New England’s Native life, lore

By Laurie Wilson Globe Correspondent August 15, 2015



Men's fancy dance, a popular contemporary powwow dance, at the Haverhill Annual Intertribal Powwow.

The first powwow Mel Ryan attended many years ago brought tears to her eyes. “I believe we come with the memories of our ancestors inherent in us through our DNA,” says Ryan, who lives in Salisbury, but was born on the Eskasoni reservation in Nova Scotia, which she left as a child. “The powwow resonated strongly with me. It felt as if my ancestors were awakened inside of me and were very happy.”

In recent years, Ryan has introduced her grandchildren to the annual Summer Moon Powwow in Danvers. “I thought it was really cool knowing where my family came from, learning about different cultures and about my Native American heritage,” says Ryan’s granddaughter, Kelsey Ryan, 9, of Dover.

Powwows are widely popular in New England, and you’ll find powwow festivals all over the region, especially in summer and fall — although there are also some that take place indoors in the winter months.

“Powwows are held for a number of reasons,” says Anthony Sky Hawk, board member of the Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness Inc. “The most significant reason is for the Native community to come together for cultural expression and to share with other Natives from around the country who are now living in the area regardless of their tribal origin,” he says. “The powwows are also an opportunity for the public to learn and share in the culture so that they have a better understanding of Native American culture and traditional ways.”

The MCNAA has been holding powwows throughout the state for more than 26 years, says Sky Hawk. Over the past 10 years or so, their popularity has grown, and you can

find at least four powwow events on a given weekend, he says. And while these events are entertaining and family-oriented (alcohol is prohibited) with educational, interactive, and fun activities, a powwow is actually a sacred experience. The circle, which is the spiritual center of the powwow, is blessed before the festivities begin and it remains sacred until the powwow is over. Each powwow also begins with a grand entrance, when all participants enter the powwow, typically led by the tribal chief, dignitaries, and elders in full regalia.

The largest powwow in New England, according to Sky Hawk, is the Aug. 29-30 **Green Corn Festival** (Schemitzun) of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe on the Mashantucket Reservation in Connecticut (also home of Foxwoods Resort Casino). The powwow will feature Woodland Village, a 17th-century eastern woodland experience, especially rich for children, where tribal members join together to perform traditions including wampum making, flint knapping, storytelling, beadwork, and open-fire cooking.

www.schemitzun.com



Dancers at the Marshfield Spring Planting Moon Powwow.

The MCNAA **Annual Intertribal Pow-Wow**, cosponsored by the City of Haverhill, will be held Sept. 12-13 at Plug Pond in Haverhill. Kayak and canoe rides in the inner pond will be available, as well as an educational, interactive workshop with educator Claudia Fox Tree, who will talk about Native American identity, culture, and history, including a conversation about stereotypes and historical inaccuracies. The public is also welcome to participate in intertribal dancing and traditional Native American dancing demonstrations. Storytelling at the tepee and native games (pine cone toss, corn cob dart throw, hoop games) are kid-friendly, and Native American food will be available, including powwow tacos, bison sliders, and succotash with cranberries, along with hamburgers, hot dogs, and other items. There is a suggested \$5 donation for admission. 617-642-1683

Another anticipated powwow in this neck of the woods is the Mohegan Tribe's **Annual Wigwam Festival** Aug. 15-16, which celebrates the Green Corn Festival (also known as

Thanksgiving for the Corn Harvest) at Fort Shantok in Uncasville, Conn. It will include native dance competitions, native crafts, native food, traditional powwow drumming, and contemporary native performers. Free admission. www.mohegan.nsn.us

Cape Cod knows a thing or two about powwows. According to Sky Hawk, it is home to the largest powwow in Massachusetts. The **Mashpee Wampanoag tribe** (also known as the People of the First Light) has inhabited present-day Massachusetts for more than 12,000 years and will celebrate its 95th native homecoming traditional powwow next summer, July 2-4, at the Cape Cod Fairgrounds. Popular events include the annual Fireball, a ceremony to offer healing for people who are seriously ill. Each player dedicates their courage to a loved one while kicking and carrying the ball under the watchful eye of the Fireball Keeper. And the traditional clambake (lobster, quahogs, clams, and corn on the cob) will be held on July 4. The theme for the powwow “will not be decided until Tribal Council appoints the powwow committee for next year,” says a spokesperson for the powwow. This summer’s theme was “Honoring All Our Relations: Land and Life.” www.mashpeewampanoagtribe.com

Mark your calendars, too, for next summer’s **Spring Planting Moon Pow-Wow**, an annual event and one of the biggest in the region, which takes place every year on Memorial Day weekend at the Marshfield Fairgrounds in Marshfield. 617-642-1683

There is **powwow etiquette** that first-timers especially need to know. “A first-time attendee should know not to take photographs of grand entry and otherwise ask permission if they want to take a photo of a dancer outside the circle,” says Sky Hawk. Also, never touch or sit at a drum without permission (drums are sacred). And never pick up a feather that has been dropped, either by you or someone else — and be sure to notify the emcee or head dancer. When a feather falls, the powwow is immediately stopped until its power is restored with a traditional dance performed by the veterans.

Laurie Wilson can be reached at laurieheather@yahoo.com.

Direct Link: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/lifestyle/travel/2015/08/15/new-england-wows-with-powwows/dRLwjswLU2MU5bFnRKmHvI/story.html>

Colonial documents reveal Chickasaws as co-founders of Creek Confederacy

August 15, 2015 2:51 PM MST



Painting of a Chickasaw family making hominy
Solomon McCombs (Creek artist) for US Postal Service

Two, long forgotten eyewitness accounts from the Colonial Period, whose complete contents were published online for the first time on August 14, 2015 by the [People of One Fire](#) research alliance, describe the Chickasaws as one of four Native American groups that came together at present day [Ocmulgee National Monument](#) in Macon, GA to form what is now the Creek Indian Tribe. Although this revelation is probably of casual interest to Mainstream America, it is bombshell for Native American scholars and tribal officials. It also has important implications for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Program (NAGPRA) of the National Park Service.

Transcribed copies of the two Colonial Era documents, entitled “*Boos-ke-tau*” and “Ways of the [Creek Indians](#)” were part of the archives of the [Georgia Historical Society](#), when it was founded in 1838. Apparently, they have been overlooked by academicians. The original versions of these documents published by the People of One Fire for were part of a cache of colonial documents discovered in England in April 2015. They had been sitting in a box for over 2 1/2 centuries, but two years ago were given an inventory number by the [United Kingdom's National Archives](#), which made their discovery possible.

The English language documents specifically state that the Cussetaws (Upper Creeks) Cowetaws (Mountain Lion People) Ochesees (Itza-se ~ Offspring of the Itza Mayas) and Chickasaws sat down together for the first time among the ruins of Ocmulgee Mounds and "buried the hatchet" in order to create the People of One Fire. Other well-known branches of the Creek Indians joined the alliance throughout the 18th century.

That cache included the original copy of the “Migration Legend of the Creek People,” which had been assumed long lost for 280 years. The Migration Legend, in much briefer language, stated that the Cussetaws, Cowetaws, Ochesee’s and Chickasaws were the “elder brothers” of the Creek Confederacy. POOF scholars, analyzing the "Migration Legend," initially discounted that statement, since nowhere in the history books had the Chickasaws ever been considered "Creek Indians."

The new information solves a riddle that has perplexed [Georgia](#)’s scholars for some time. No official federal government map shows the Chickasaws ever living in Georgia. However, the recently discovered documents describe the Chickasaws as the “brothers and neighbors” of the Cussetaws (Upper Creeks.) In other words, the Chickasaws were indigenous to North Georgia, but moved west before British colonial officials were familiar with the Southeast’s interior.

The memoirs of the famous frontiersman and author, James Adair, state that he led a regiment of Northeast Georgia Chickasaws against the Cherokees in the First Anglo-Cherokee War. His book also states that he married a Chickasaw woman, who lived in the Chickasaw town of Ustanauli in northwest Georgia, where the Cherokee capital of New Echota was later built.

Archaeological evidence also supports the newly discovered documents. In 1939, the famous archaeologist, Robert Wauchope, unearthed an 1,100 year old, oval-shaped village with oval-shaped houses in the contemporary village of Sautee in the Nacoochee Valley of the Georgia Mountains. He was aware of the Cherokee tradition that Sautee was named after a Chickasaw warrior and that the Chickasaws had once occupied the Nacoochee Valley, but discounted that story as being pure fiction.

The [Tribal Historic Preservation Office of the Chickasaw Nation](#) was contacted confidentially after the two documents were first discovered in England. Its staff confirmed that oval houses were typical of the Chickasaw and that they had a tradition of once “living in the east,” but the staff members didn’t know where.

Lost documents will be published together in near future.

In early 2015, Lumbee historian and regional planner, Michael Jacobs, discovered a letter written in French on January 6, 1660 from a director of the long forgotten colony of Melilot in present day Northeast Metro Atlanta to a French Protestant minister in Rotterdam. The Melilot colony was founded by survivors of Fort Caroline in late 1565. Beginning around 1600, its name appeared on almost all European maps for almost a century, but its existence has been completely forgotten by contemporary academicians. During the 1600s Melilot evolved into a polyglot colony composed of Northern European Protestants, Spanish gold miners, Middle Eastern refugees and Sephardic Jews from the Netherlands.

Jacobs is currently translating the letter from Melilot into English. This translation, plus annotated translations into modern English of the British colonial documents discovered in April 2015, will be published together in one book, so that the general public may enjoy a unique journey into the past.

Native American researchers are diving into controversial issues.

In late 2007, 18 Native American professors and professionals formed an alliance to share research and promote scientific studies of the Southeast’s pre-European past. The group named itself, the People of One Fire, which was the original name of the Creek Indian Confederacy. Since then membership has grown to over a hundred Native Americans and sympathetic non-indigenous scholars. In 2008, researchers expanded their focus to include the Colonial Period and early 1800s.

A primary rule of POOF’s research, which is displayed prominently on their web site, is that facts can only be defined by scientific analysis, historical archives and eyewitness

accounts, not by the opinion of academic authority figures or faculty committees, aka peer review. Anything else is considered speculation and theory that may or may not be true.

According to their web site, from the beginning, POOF included members, who were from the Creek, Yuchi, Chickasaw, Seminole, Lumbee and Choctaw Tribes. When DNA tests revealed that Georgia and South Carolina “Cherokees” had much more in common genetically with the Creeks than with other branches of the Cherokees, many Cherokees also began joining the organization. Research by Boston College graduate, Marilyn Rae, into the writings of 17th century ethnologist, Charles de Rochefort, has turned the history books upside down. She is a direct descendant of the last hereditary Cherokee Principal Chief, Pathkiller.

Also, according to the website, the People of One Fire always has included Native American university professors and museum directors. These academicians appear to play a very active role behind the scenes, but their names are seldom mentioned on the public web site. An Auburn University professor, who is a "secret" member of POOF requested to remain anonymous. He stated that "academic politics are vitriolic these days. Most Native American professors are resentful of the way their perspective has been ignored in the past, but we also must also avoid association with controversies to protect our jobs."

It is obvious that the organization's website only contains articles by academicians from north of the Mason-Dixon Line and Europe. Almost all the reports and articles from non-academicians were posted by Native American professionals, living in the Southeastern United States.

However, the situation is quite different among universities elsewhere in the nation and predominantly African-American universities everywhere. The only public presentation in Georgia by a POOF member, concerning the “Mayas in North America” controversy was personally funded by an African-American university professor and an African-American judge.

Most of POOF's recent research, which is posted on their web site, involves analysis of Native American languages, Colonial Era maps and long-forgotten archives. Comments posted under the articles suggest that whenever their members interpret the Pre-European towns and shrines built by their ancestors, they are subjected to vicious personal attacks from anonymous persons on the internet. However, as a founding member of the organization, Ric Edwards, recently stated, “If someone is not controversial then they are not doing anything.”

Direct Link: <http://www.examiner.com/article/colonial-documents-reveal-chickasaws-as-co-founders-of-creek-confederacy>

Preserving the legacies of the nations

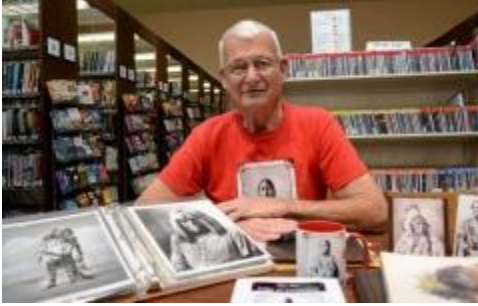
By Lois A. Grimm, Correspondent
Published: August 16, 2015



LOIS A. GRIMM / FOR THE CITIZENS' VOICE Annie Pueblo of the Pueblo tribe, photographed by photographer Frank Rinehart and included in Royal Sutton's book, "At the Edge of Extinction".



LOIS A. GRIMM / FOR THE CITIZENS' VOICE An example of a glass negative.



In a world where 28,000 images are uploaded to Instagram every minute and millions of photos are taken every day by cellphone cameras, tablets and digital cameras, a collection of 500 antique glass negatives and photos may not seem all that impressive. However, taking photographs 120 years ago was an investment in time, energy, funds and knowledge. Today, we don't have to even press a button, just a touch screen. However, photographers of yesteryear labored for 30 to 60 minutes just to arrange their camera, prepare a negative plate and position their subjects just so.

Royal Sutton, of Trucksville, has paid homage to the work of photographers of bygone eras by acting as a custodian of images taken by Frank Rinehart. Rinehart was a Nebraskan photographer based in downtown Omaha when Sutton first met him. Sutton, an airman in the United States Air Force at the time, was looking for extra work outside of his administrative duties with a military photo lab. In 1953, he began working at Rinehart-Marsden Studios in Omaha.

Rinehart was the photographer and original owner of the studios. George Marsden was also a photographer and eventually took over the studio. When Marsden passed away in 1966, Sutton took over the business at the Brandeis Building in downtown Omaha. Sutton would later sell the business and most of the equipment in 1969.

But he kept the glass negatives and negative copies of Native Americans that Rinehart had taken during the 1898 Nebraska State Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition in Omaha, Nebraska.

"I honestly can't say what drove me to keep them. I believe in God and I feel like I was led to keep them for a reason," said Sutton.

When he moved to the Back Mountain area a few years later for work, he took great care to secure and safely transport Rinehart and Marsden's negatives.

"We had a moving van, but you know sometimes you can't trust them. So I packed them in the back of our station wagon. The car ended up catching fire, if you can believe it. Luckily it was just the engine," said Sutton, laughing.

During the World's Fair expo in 1898, 500 Native Americans were brought in to showcase different aspects of their unique cultures; cultures that vary even in the same tribes. Rinehart photographed each Native American in a studio set up on the fairgrounds.

His photographs, while somewhat similar, captured each person in a distinctive approach, displaying individual personalities and features. Among Rinehart's subjects were Geronimo, Chief Sitting Bull, Chief Red Cloud and Wah-Ta-Waso.

"People didn't know anything about Native Americans. Many people were just seeing them for the first time (at the expo)," said Sutton.

Rinehart used glass negatives to capture the likenesses of the Native Americans while Marsden later made a master copy of each. Rinehart studied under the well known William Henry Jackson, a photographer closely linked to the American West. Perhaps because of this association, Rinehart developed a keen and strong interest in Native American cultures.

In 1974, Sutton gave the negatives to Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas. Originally founded as a boarding school for Native American children, the postsecondary institution serves Native American college students.

"I felt that the negatives belonged there. They didn't belong to me. It made the most sense to give Haskell the negatives," said Sutton.

During the festivities which followed Haskell's acquirement, Sutton and his wife met several Native American alumni of Haskell. Not only did he learn that several of them had relatives whom Rinehart had photographed, but they had also walked to Haskell University from points north in Nebraska to attend school.

"I was shocked. I couldn't believe these women would walk all that way to go to school," said Sutton.

One of Sutton's greatest concerns is that Native American culture will be forgotten if no one is around to educate younger generations. Because of his concern, Sutton has published books of Rinehart's photographs. Most recently he published "On The Edge Of Extinction." Part pictorial essay, part historical record, "On the Edge of Extinction" is a great primer for learning about many of the different Native American tribes. Adolf Muhr, another photographer with Rinehart-Marsden Studio, interviewed many of the photographic subjects about their lives on the plains. Their memories precede each set of photographs. The book also delves into Rinehart's life and illustrates how the contemporary public felt about the Trans-Mississippi Expo.

Sutton, in conjunction with the Luzerne County Historical Society, recently held a meet and greet/book signing at the historical society museum in Wilkes-Barre.

Direct Link: <http://citizensvoice.com/arts-living/preserving-the-legacies-of-the-nations-1.1926121>

Rivets, mirrors and cultural change “Rosie the Riveter”

Al Cooper 1:53 p.m. MDT August 16, 2015



In the 17th century, trade goods from Europe found their way across the Atlantic, changing the life of Native Americans in many ways. Arrow heads of iron and steel, weaving beads of cast glass, yarns and cloth with dyed red colors were tools that saved time and energy.

In most cases though, the numerous tribal peoples continued to preserve the “old ways and crafts” as well.

Mirrors however were sheer magic and revolutionized family relationships in ways that continue to impress social scientists who specialize in studying the moments of change-in-direction of entire elements of culture.

The division of labor in the Native American or “Indian” (for convenience) family had been established over centuries of real-life experience and tradition. When preparing a warrior for battle (and inter-tribal warfare was a constant in Indian life across North America long before white man entered the picture), it was the woman of the household who meticulously, proudly and lovingly applied her husband’s war paint, stroke by colorful stroke. It was actually a “spiritual” connection between the two; a moment of profound intimacy.

With the coming of the mirror the man-of-the-house could paint himself. Doesn’t sound like a big deal? In a very real way, it undercut and reduced the importance and personal power of the woman in the family and community. At a time when the arrival of white man’s alcohol was about to threaten the very foundations of a thousand-year culture, the power of a village’s women might have been a bulwark.

In 1940-41, it was clear to U.S. leaders that we were certain to be swept into what was still “Europe’s War.” From England’s experience it was also clear that ways had to be found to compensate for the impact mobilization would have on the manufacturing industry, at the very time vital production capacity would have to expand exponentially. Experts from industry, labor and government were asked to calculate how many of these jobs could be filled with inexperienced women in a wartime scenario.

The most optimistic estimates topped out at 20 percent. By war's end in 1945, 85 percent of those jobs — especially those associated with the building of airplanes, ships, tanks, munitions and other new and complex instruments of war — would be filled by female workers.

In 1942 both government and industry got in the business of flooding the media with advertisements urging women to help win the war, developed around an image which was a composite of American “housewives” building airplanes, several of whom were actually named Rosalind. The result was one of the most successful media campaigns in history and the creation of a near-mythological figure named “Rosie the Riveter.”

It was hoped — and believed — these war-time “Rosies” would return to the homes they had temporarily abandoned, when the emergency was over. And many did. But several million didn't, perhaps influenced by new advertisements asking such questions as, “how would you like a new kitchen mixer?”

In key ways however, American culture had been changed forever. It had been proven that women could do almost any job a man could do and even become a “second” breadwinner for a family, thus moving many into or out of the “middle class” category and able to afford a larger home or a second car. Less often mentioned but worth consideration is a marked relaxation of the racial divide and a change in attitude between white and black women who now worked side-by-side and shared lunch rooms and newborn friendships.

And unlike the Native American spouse of an earlier century, American women found themselves with much greater power, in the family, the community and even in the country's political arena. Many sociologists cite the “Rosie the Riveter” era as the birthplace of the modern “Women's Movement.”

Listen to Al Cooper at 4 p.m. each Monday on Cedar City's KSUB 590 AM. Email him at ascooper@infowest.com

Direct Link: <http://www.thespectrum.com/story/life/family/2015/08/16/rivets-mirrors-cultural-change-rosie-riveter/31818813/>

San Antonio missions tour to tell Native American story

Published 11:51 am, Monday, August 17, 2015



In a Thursday, Aug. 13, 2015 photo, Ramon Vasquez, left, executive director for American Indians of Texas, and Jesus Jose Reyes, Jr., anthropologist and historian for the Taap Piilamm Coahuilan Nation tribe, talk about organizing tours at the San Antonio Missions at Mission San Jose, Texas. The tours, which start at \$50, will offer people a perspective from an aboriginal descendant to bring awareness of contributions of Native Americans to San Antonio. (Kin Man Hui/San Antonio Express-News via AP)

In a Thursday, Aug. 13, 2015 photo, Ramon Vasquez, left, executive director for American Indians of Texas, and Jesus Jose Reyes, Jr., anthropologist and historian for the Taap Piilamm Coahuilan Nation tribe, talk about organizing tours at the San Antonio Missions at Mission San Jose, Texas. The tours, which start at \$50, will offer people a perspective from an aboriginal descendant to bring awareness of contributions of Native Americans to San Antonio. (Kin Man Hui/San Antonio Express-News via AP)

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Gazing across the stone ruins, grassy expanse and restored white church that remains an active Catholic parish at Mission San Juan, [Ramon Vasquez](#) contemplated how hard it must have been for the first indigenous people to enter this new way of life.

"You can imagine that some of our people said, 'Life as we know it ends today, and we need to go into this mission,'" for safety and stability in the Texas frontier of the 1700s, he told the San Antonio Express-News (<http://bit.ly/1PvC7ZE>).

"Others said, 'We'll die, as we are today, and we'll never enter that mission.' And they stayed out."

That choice — submission to a strange new culture and religion under Spanish rule, in exchange for protection from starvation and hostile invaders — may be hard for people in a free society to process today. But Vasquez, executive director of the American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions, wants to provide a tour that forces visitors to ponder the sacrifices, contributions and dilemmas of his ancestors.

The nonprofit group had talked about a tour of the San Antonio missions for at least 10 years before they were named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in July, and now the organization plans to offer tours to the public in the fall. It already has scheduled tours as part of a four-day "Historic Discoveries" vacation package marketed to out-of-town visitors by the city's Convention & [Visitors Bureau](#), with the first set for Sept. 24 to 27.

[Casandra Matej](#), the bureau's executive director, said the agency partnered with Vasquez's group to "offer a personalized tour of San Antonio's missions from tribe descendents" as part of a fall package spotlighting "San Antonio's epic history."

"This is a phenomenal way to continue promoting the missions' recent World Heritage designation, while incorporating the American Indian perspective on the history of the missions," Matej said.

Vasquez said he offers the mission tour privately to groups but wants to open it to the local public, possibly in October. A 2½-hour tour will likely run about \$50, with a 4½-hour tour that includes food, music and craft demonstrations at \$75.

The tours will benefit the Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan Nation, a group of about 250 active individuals whose ancestors were among a mix of indigenous people, many linked by language and known collectively as Coahuiltecan, who built the missions and contributed to early South Texas farming, ranching and cultural traditions.

"I think that's a good beginning for healing, even though a lot of the history was not a very good one for our people," said [Jesus Jose](#) "Jesse" Reyes Jr., an anthropologist, board member of American Indians in Texas and, like Vasquez, a Tap Pilam descendant.

The Tap Pilam community, which for years has been engaged in a lengthy process to be federally recognized, has retained its songs and ceremonies but has "pretty much almost lost" its language, Reyes said. The group uses a documented dialect known as Pajalate as its "reconstruction language."

The tours begin at Mission Concepcion, then stop at Mission San Jose and Mission Espada before ending at Mission San Juan, where the remains of more than 100 mission inhabitants were unearthed and later repatriated in separate ceremonies in 1999 and 2013. Although the Alamo is a historic mission and part of the World Heritage designation, it is not included in the tour because of wait times at the popular 1836 battle site downtown, Vasquez said.

A long, painful chapter for the mission descendants unfolded after the Archdiocese of San Antonio let archaeologists excavate portions of San Juan in 1967. Human remains of at least 92 people were used in university studies in Texas. After years of pleading and fighting for their ancestors' return, Coahuiltecan descendants reburied the remains in 1999 on the east side of the mission courtyard, at the site of a mission church that was never completed.

While preparing the bones physically and spiritually for reburial, Reyes lived for a month in a house at the mission's northwest corner, keeping a fire continuously burning.

"The only thing that we could do as lineal descendants was put them back where they came from in the most respectful way, to ensure that this will never, ever happen to them again," Vasquez said.

In 2012, during a renovation project, the remains of about 15 more people, including infants and children, were found near the door of the existing church, which served as a chapel in the mission era. Vasquez said it was common to bury the dead in or near the church at each mission, including San Antonio de Valero — the Alamo. Those remains also were reburied.

San Juan remained an active community, with people living on the site until after World War II, before it was recognized as sacred and historic, he said. But Vasquez said his family members' claims to Native American ties have at times been met with ridicule.

To counter the skepticism, Reyes said he hopes to share stories of the mission "Indian militia" that protected settlers and even presidio soldiers from attacks by indigenous tribes from the north.

"Those are the unsung heroes of the missions, and that is our lineal descendancy," he said. "Those are the native peoples from this area who learned how to participate and contribute to the earlier days of what is now San Antonio. And that is the story that I would like told, especially now that it's an international site."

This is an AP Member Exchange shared by the San Antonio Express-News.

Direct Link: <http://www.chron.com/news/texas/article/San-Antonio-missions-tour-to-tell-Native-American-6448792.php>

The 4th Miss Native American USA Pageant Crowns a Winner

[Jason Morgan Edwards](#)
8/17/15

The 4th Miss Native American USA pageant was held on August 8th in Tempe, AZ. Nine young women, representing six different tribes, competed for this year's title. The first pageant winner, Shaylin Shabi (Navajo/Dine') acted as hostess and Mistress of Ceremonies. Current title-holder, April Brannon Yazza (Zuni Pueblo and Navajo/Dine') presented the sash to the new Miss Native American USA 2015, Kristina Hyatt (Eastern Band of Cherokee). Rising star, Sage Bond, was the evening's entertainment. The Pageant Director/Owner of MNAUSA Organization is Tashina Atine (Navajo/Dine').

"Our Mission is dedicated to recognizing and honoring Native American women throughout the United States. We encourage Indigenous women in achieving their personal goals, build characters, enhance self-esteem, and develop leadership skills alongside giving back to our Native communities through volunteering. MNAUSA helps promote, address, support, and collaborate in areas of continuing education, domestic violence, alcohol & drugs, suicide prevention, teenage pregnancy, youth violence, AIDS prevention, diabetes prevention and intervention in urban and Native Americans communities."



Lyla Hatathlie - Navajo/Dine' - Coal Mine Canyon, Arizona. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards



Daphne Coriz - Santo Domingo Pueblo - Santo Domingo Pueblo, New Mexico. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards



Emilia Sloan - Navajo/Dine' - Cane Valley, Arizona. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards



Kristina Hyatt - Eastern Band of Cherokee - Cherokee, North Carolina. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards



Aliyah Chavez - Santo Domingo Pueblo - Santo Domingo Pueblo, New Mexico, was voted 2nd Attendant. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards



Kansas Begaye - Navajo/Dine' - Waterflow, New Mexico, was voted 1st Attendant. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards



Dominique Nosie-Romo - San Carlos Apache & Ak-Chin Indian Community - Peridot, AZ. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards



Raeanna Begay - Navajo/Dine' - Sheep Springs, New Mexico, was voted Miss Congeniality. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards



Mariah Gachupin - Jemez Pueblo - Jemez Pueblo, New Mexico. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards

DeWayne Dawson (Navajo), PR Director for the pageant, says that what distinguishes MNAUSA from other pageants is "the MNAUSA title gives our titleholders the opportunity to share their culture from their respected tribes and mend it with the modern world we live in today. We encourage both the traditional and modern world to be equally represented by each titleholder throughout their reign. An example would be a titleholder attending a university working toward a degree and also attending traditional events/ceremonies on their reservations - she will encourage higher education and teach other Native Tribes/Non Natives across the country and around the world about her culture. The title projects the voices of our titleholders to share their platforms, encourage higher education, learn leadership, and healthy living to name a few in both mainstream and Native American communities."

The young women, aged 18-27, must be US citizens, and must reside within the US throughout her yearlong reign. The contestant must be 1/4 Native American and provide proof of Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB). She must have never been married, pregnant or have any dependents. Finally, each contestant must hold a charitable platform during the initial competition and the winner must continue to support her platform throughout her reign.

Dawson continues: "MNAUSA's duties as a Native American ambassador is to support and encourage her platform among the Native/Non Native communities throughout the country and around the world. This is done by traveling to Native American gatherings, schools, universities or other pageants to present her message to the public. MNAUSA

also does radio, television and magazine appearances, again promoting her platform. She will appear in public in either her traditional regalia or a modern wear, depending on the event but will always wear her sash and our now iconic crown. With grace and poise, our talented, beautiful, educated, and well-spoken titleholders become great role models to youth everywhere, and an added bonus is that they are proud Native Americans sharing their message and culture."



The new Miss Native American USA 2015, Kristina Hyatt - Eastern Band of Cherokee - Cherokee, North Carolina. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards



Hostess, Mistress of Ceremonies, and 2012 Miss Native American USA Shaylin Shabi (Navajo/Dine'), Miss Native American USA 2015 winner Kristina Hyatt (Eastern Band of Cherokee), 2014 Miss Native American USA April Brannon Yazza (Zuni Pueblo and Navajo/Dine'), 2013 Miss Native American USA Sarah Ortegon (Northern Arapaho and the Eastern Shoshone Tribes), on Aug 8, 2015. Photo: Jason Morgan Edwards

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/08/17/4th-miss-native-american-usa-pageant-crowns-winner-161411>

Despite Open Door, Native American Tribes Not Moving to Legalize Marijuana

August 17, 2015

By **Lex Talamo**
News21

Most Native American tribes are opting not to legalize marijuana, though at least two are poised to try it — just six months after a Justice Department memo indicated federal authorities likely would not interfere with growing marijuana on tribal lands if other federal crimes were not committed.

About This Story



This report is part of the project titled [“America’s Weed Rush.”](#) produced by the Carnegie-Knight News21 initiative, a national investigative reporting project involving top college journalism students across the country and headquartered at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University.

Many tribes exploring their options said that as U.S. citizens and sovereign nations, they deserve the right to choose to legalize as states have done. However, tribes continue to balk at the vague language of the Justice Department’s so-called “Cole Memorandum” and the fear of federal prosecution.

“This is not the position of the entire federal government. It’s very complicated,” said tribal attorney Lael Echo-Hawk of the Seattle-based law firm of Garvey, Schubert, Barer. “Tribes interested need to get some written assurance from their district attorney because possessing a Schedule I controlled substance carries serious penalties and is not something to be taken lightly.”

The Cole memo notes that nothing in it “alters the authority or jurisdiction of the United States to enforce federal law in Indian country” but leaves it to federal prosecutors to prioritize enforcement based on factors like distribution to minors, trafficking with criminal enterprises, drugged driving and possession on federal property.

“If tribes don’t do this right, their situation could get a lot worse,” said Robert Williams, director of the Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program at the University of Arizona. “The stakes are high, and the consequences could be disastrous.”

Domestic violence, substance abuse and suicide rates on reservations are many times higher than the national average. Additional problems include poor housing and education systems. While some leaders believe legalizing marijuana would exacerbate

their tribe's tribulations, others view marijuana as an economic opportunity to reclaim financial independence and improve the quality of life for their people.

"From a social standpoint, Natives have some of the highest percentages of the worst categories in this country in terms of suicide, drug abuse, child mortality ... indicators of a society in decline," said Brandon Cornelison, president of the Facebook group Native American Cannabis Coalition and a member of the Sac and Fox of the Mississippi in Iowa.

He supports legalizing, saying, "Something has to change."

The Pinoleville Pomo tribe in California plans to build a medical marijuana grow operation in Mendocino and the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe of South Dakota has decided to legalize and start selling marijuana by next year. Neither tribe would comment on the plans.

Native American sales on reservations are not subject to federal taxes. Tribes that favor legalization believe they could generate much-needed revenue through innovative business and pharmaceutical ventures.

Matt Bear, a member of the Meskwaki tribe of Iowa, said legalization presents an opportunity because Iowa currently has no manufacturers of medical marijuana.



Tribes are concerned about the impact that legalizing marijuana might have on youth and communities that already struggle with addiction and drug abuse. Shown here is a home on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. (Photo by Kelcie Johnson/News21.)

"Patients need to travel four to 12 hours, to Colorado or Minnesota, to gain their medication," Bear said. "The tribe could take advantage of this opportunity for economic development and also provide a very stable and much-needed pharmaceutical."

Multiple companies have jumped at the chance to work with tribes in developing large-scale marijuana operations.

Medical marijuana, its supporters say, is better than using opiates for chronic pain.

Shondel Barber, of the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe in Wisconsin, said she would rather see people taking medical marijuana for pain than heroin or Vicodin and added that the revenue generated from marijuana could help the tribe.

“There have been so many cutbacks on so many programs,” she said. “Our schools need money. Our Boys and Girls Club needs money. We need a bigger clinic. If we had more money, we would be able to provide more for people.”

Other tribal representatives said they worry legalization will further increase high rates of drug use among Native Americans.

“We’re already dealing with substance abuse,” said Attorney General Alfred Urbina of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe in Arizona.

Even if legalizing marijuana could help tribes, many said they are leery of legalizing with only the Cole Memorandum as a guide.

“It’s a policy decision, not a change in the law,” Urbina said.

Participating in the marijuana industry may have other risks like the losing federal funding.

“Each time a tribe agrees to accept federal funding, they also agree not to violate federal law,” said Echo-Hawk, the Seattle attorney who is also a member of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma. “Engaging in the industry, which is a violation of the Federal Controlled Substances Act, could lead to a federal agency freezing funding to that tribe.”

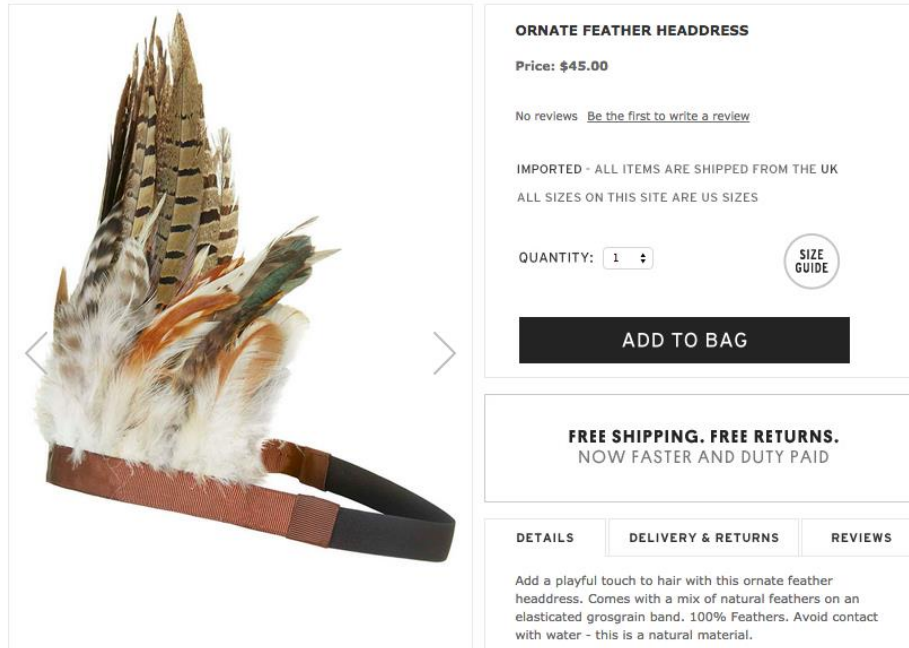
Lex Talamo is a Hearst Fellow.

Direct Link: <http://fcir.org/2015/08/17/despite-open-door-native-american-tribes-not-moving-to-legalize-marijuana/>

5 Items Fashion Loves to Steal From Native American Culture

By [Theresa Avila](#) August 17, 2015

Just when you thought the fashion industry had gotten the memo that Native American headdresses aren't a trend, Topshop goes and [introduces](#) its "[ornate feather headdress](#)."



It's the latest snafu in a long-running history of fashion designers and companies, from [H&M](#) and [Urban Outfitters](#) to [Asos](#) and [Victoria's Secret](#), cribbing items from Native American culture, many of which are sacred. Native Americans have a long history of marginalization in the United States, and the fashion industry has kept the tradition going by borrowing, taking inspiration without credit or [blatantly copying](#) from Native culture.

It's not that Native American culture can't inspire contemporary designers, said Jessica R. Metcalfe, Ph.D. and creator of [Beyond Buckskin](#), a blog centered on Native American fashion, to *Mic*. It's about honoring and taking the source into consideration:

"If you're trying to rip off Native American culture, without having any connection to Native people, I think that that is unethical because a lot of these companies are making a lot of money off of the Native American trend and often selling the legacies that we've built, and none of that money or recognition goes back to Native people. So it is as if our culture has been hijacked without our consent."

That can mean including indigenous designers in the creative process, or ensuring the profits don't entirely elude Native sources. It also means getting educated about the diversity and intricacies of Native American culture.

"At this point, they're taking our voices and our designs from us," Bethany Yellowtail, a Native American designer, [previously told Mic](#). "They don't acknowledge us as living people and nations. This is not just fashion, it's part of our tribal identities."

What's getting cribbed without acknowledgment? And how can everyone do better? Here's are five trends that have Native American roots which we shouldn't ignore. Listen closely, Topshop.

1. The Native American headdress

It's sacred. Full stop.

The headdress' meaning varies from nation to nation, Metcalfe said, but it's is commonly designated as a sacred item that must be earned, usually by males. In some cultures, good deeds are rewarded with the gifting of eagle feathers; when a man has accumulated a lot of feathers, he can then make a headdress, she said. Women, too, sometimes wear feathers during special ceremonies.

Yet the Native American headdress tops the list of items that fashion has culturally appropriated without any regard to its origins or cultural significance.

"I think that whenever you are wearing a Native American headdress when you're not a Native person," Metcalfe said, "you are actively engaging in the destruction of our cultural practices by negating all of those values."

2. Moccasins



Manitobah, one of Canada's fastest-growing footwear brands, partner with Aboriginal artisans and organizations in the creation of its moccasins. Source: [Manitobah Mukluks](#)

At this point, moccasins have become a [shoe category](#) unto themselves for retailers. But the design has clear origins in Native culture. The exact designs vary from tribe to tribe, but were historically usually [made of a soft leather](#) like deerskin.

Since moccasins aren't a sacred item, they can be worn by everyone, Metcalfe said. But since they've been reimagined by different companies, Metcalfe said that shoppers could avoid buying from companies that have no direct tie to the Native culture that first inspired it.

As she put it to *Mic*, "Are you giving your money to a company that is... hijacking someone else's culture, or can you instead put the money back into the community that invented this specific form of footwear?"

3. Fringe

Fringe isn't a style that's exclusive to Native American culture. It can, however, be murky territory when used as a symbol to caricature Native American culture.

Native American clothing sometimes featured fringed detailing on skirts, jackets and moccasins for decorative and functional purposes. Warriors who wanted to [disguise their paths](#) would use long fringe attached to their moccasins, the fringe sweeping the ground as they walked to erase their foot patterns.

4. Textiles and beadwork



"Navajo" designs by Forever 21 and Urban Outfitters came under fire for pretty much having nothing to do with the Navajo nation. Source: [Urban Outfitters/Forever 21 via Jezebel](#)

Native American textiles and beadwork are difficult to characterize since each nation can have [distinct colors or designs](#), Metcalfe said. A common thread, however, is the use of geometric patterns, which along with colors can help tell stories, she said. For instance, a design might be representative of surrounding landscape and make references to the sky, mountain, river or trail.

Certain beadwork and patterns [also signified](#) certain life events or family relations. Today, the significance of these beaded patterns or prints are often overlooked.

The tiny beading on the "doll" bag showcases the concept of mirroring, according to "Grand Procession: Contemporary Artistic Visions of American Indians." The floral design on the earrings is commonly associated with Indians of woodlands areas. Source: [Beyond Buckskin](#)

5. Turquoise

The American Southwest is known for turquoise stone and the belief systems associated with it, Metcalfe said. While turquoise isn't worn or used exclusively by Native Americans, it is important to understand that it could have a special significance or reference to water or the sky, she said. "There are meanings that go beyond just 'it's a pretty color,'" she said.

"We have four sacred stones, and the No. 1 is turquoise," Navajo silversmith Mae Peshlakai [told Al-Jazeera](#) earlier this year. "It's your connection to Mother Earth and Father Sky and living in harmony with everything that exists in between."

Those are details the average non-Native shopper wouldn't know, of course. So just ask.

"If you're doing a blatant rip-off of a Native American style or Native theme," Metcalfe said, "then you're negating the fact that there are over 500 separate individually recognized Native American nations and that we're all different. We're all diverse, and we have a lot to offer the world, and we would like some recognition in that."

Direct Link: <http://mic.com/articles/123995/5-items-high-fashion-loves-to-steal-from-native-americans>

Officials blame meth for pregnant Native American woman's death in jail — but family says she was not a user

[Arturo Garcia](#)

[17 Aug 2015 at 20:04 ET](#)

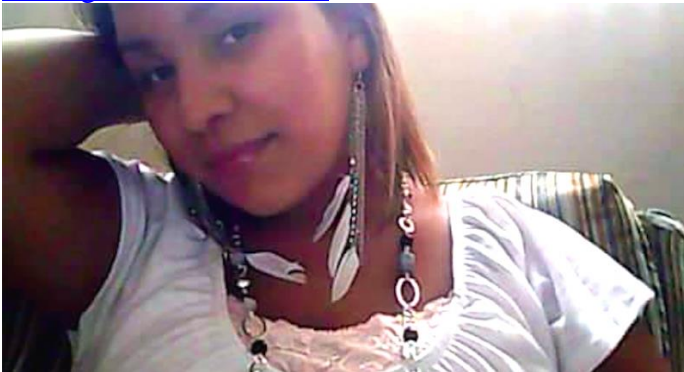


Image: Sarah Lee Circle Bear (Facebook.com)

The family of 24-year-old Sarah Lee Circle Bear questioned an autopsy report saying she died from overdosing on methamphetamines, [Red Power Media reported](#).

"How did she get that much meth?" asked her father, Terrence Circle Bear.

[As the Associated Press reported](#), state Attorney General Marty Jackley said that there was “acute methamphetamine and amphetamine toxicity” in Circle Bear’s blood. The results are not available to the public, he said, but he is investigating where the substance came from.

Jackley said his office was asked by Brown County Sheriff Mark Milbrandt to review Circle Bear’s death. Milbrandt did not comment on the autopsy results.

Sarah Circle Bear died on July 6 at an Aberdeen, South Dakota hospital, after being found unresponsive in her cell. She had been taken into custody on a bond violation. Witnesses said jail officials told her to [“quit faking”](#) when she said she was in pain while being taken to the cell.

Her older sister, Adrienne Yancey, [told Indian Country Today Media Network](#) that she obtained the jumpsuit she was wearing at the time of her death.

“They just handed it to me in a white bag,” Yancey said. “It just smelled weird, so I opened it up and I just seen the blood on there. So I just wrapped it back up.”

County coroner Mike Carlsen has said that the blood stemmed from an auto accident Circle Bear suffered before being taken into custody. However, Jackley later said that the autopsy showed no signs of injury that could have contributed to her death.

Her family also rejected the allegation that Circle Bear was using meth because she was pregnant with her third child and was meeting with doctors following complications with the birth of her youngest son. Her father said he is meeting with an attorney regarding the case.

“I’m getting justice for a native girl that was crying and they didn’t want to help her,” he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.rawstory.com/2015/08/officials-blame-meth-for-pregnant-native-american-womans-death-in-jail-but-family-says-she-was-not-a-user/>

Research confirms Native American use of sweetgrass as bug repellent

By [Wilborn P. Nobles III](#) August 18 at 2:57 AM



Sweetgrass, a plant used in traditional medicine, contains compounds that can repel mosquitoes. (Andrew Maxwell Phineas Jones/University of Guelph)

Western science has caught up with Native American wisdom in uses for sweetgrass as researchers identify compounds in the aromatic herb that can keep mosquitoes at bay.

The American Chemical Society will host a news conference Tuesday morning to discuss that their experiments revealed how chemicals in sweetgrass oil match the repelling effectiveness of the common ingredient in insect sprays like Off! Deep Woods.

The findings come from studies of traditional therapies in Native American tribes. Sweetgrass is one of the sacred plants traditionally used in Native American culture.

[Scholars report that](#) it was also used as incense in ritual purifications. Natives have always known that its fragrance kept biting bugs away, and they often covered themselves and their homes in the plant.

“We found that in our search for new insect repellents, folk remedies have provided good leads,” according to Chemist Charles Cantrell in a [news release from the American Chemical Society](#).

Cantrell and the U.S. Department of Agriculture investigated the compounds by steam-distilling oil from the plant and testing the mosquitoes’ avoidance of the oil alongside the standard insect repellent DEET.

Basketweaver Marilyn Dingle uses sweetgrass for her craft, and she chuckled when [South Carolina’s Post and Courier](#) newspaper told her about the research. But she said the bugs don’t bother her when she’s pulling the plants.

“That’s something to think about,” [Dingle said to the newspaper](#). “Gee whiz.”

Researchers found that the chemicals phytol and coumarin in sweetgrass repel insects, and both of these compounds are already known to have these effects. Cantrell is nonetheless happy to show that “there’s a real scientific basis to this folklore.”

Direct Link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/08/18/research-confirms-native-american-use-of-sweetgrass-as-bug-repellent/>

Caught On Tape: Native Americans Chase John McCain Off Navajo Land

Submitted by [Tyler Durden](#) on 08/17/2015 22:00 -0400

[Submitted by Derrick Broze via TheAntiMedia.org,](#)

On Friday, August 14, Arizona Senator **John McCain** was [confronted several times](#) by **Native activists and elders while visiting the Navajo Nation**. McCain and Arizona Governor Doug Ducey were meeting with the Navajo at the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock for an event honoring the Navajo Code Talkers of World War 2.

The governor and senator were also meeting with local Navajo officials to **discuss their concerns about a new proposal regarding the Little Colorado River rights**. Navajo Nation President Russell Begay told the Navajo Times that water was going to be a part of the talks.

“We’re going to talk about it,” he [told the Times](#). “The message we want to convey to Arizona is a discussion. We want to begin dialogue on securing our claim.”

McCain has recently received criticism for his role in passing the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange bill as part of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015. The law allows for the sale of the Oak Flat campground to international mining company, Rio Tinto. Oak Flat is historically important to the San Carlos Apache. [MintPress News recently wrote:](#)

“The Apache Stronghold formed in December in response to [a last-minute legislative provision](#) included in the the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015. The provision at issue in the annual Defense Department funding bill grants Resolution Copper Mining, a subsidiary of Australian-English mining giant Rio Tinto, a 2,400-acre land parcel which includes parts of the Tonto National Forest, protected national forest in Arizona where it will create the continent’s largest copper mine.

Some of those lands are considered sacred by multiple Native American communities, including the Oak Flat campground. The area is not recognized as part of the San Carlos Apache Reservation, but it has historically been used by the Apache for trading purposes and spiritual ceremonies.”

While McCain met with Ducey and the Navajo nation, activists with the Apache Stronghold — and other groups and nations — rallied outside the museum, holding signs that read “*McCain = Indian Killer*” and “*McCain’s Not Welcome Here*.” Eventually, the activists made their way inside the building, locking arms and chanting, “*Water is life!*”

Inside the museum, John McCain was rubbing elbows with Navajo leaders and snapping photos with the community. One person decided to take an opportunity to confront John McCain with a message about Oak Flat. That person was Adriano Tsinigine. Tsinigine, a high school senior carrying a “Protect Oak Flat” card, walked up to McCain for a picture. Tsinigine told the [Phoenix New Times](#) about his experience:

“I pulled out my [Protect] Oak Flat card,” he says. When McCain noticed it, ‘He took it, looked at it, and threw it back at me. How disrespectful to me and to the Apache people. I fully respect McCain as a veteran . . . and as a POW and for sacrificing [what could have been] his life, but I do not respect him as a U.S. senator. As an elected official, he should listen to all of the voices of people, [even] the people who are protesting against him.’”

Senator McCain would later be interviewed about the Oak flat controversy. “*Historians have attested to the facts that Oak Flat is not anything to do with sacred grounds,*” he [told 12 News](#). “*Several historians have attested to that. I respect people’s right to disagree.*”

As McCain attempted a backdoor exit, the activists chanted in the hallway with their arms linked. Once they noticed McCain’s convoy making an escape, the group began chasing on foot. They were temporarily blocked by law enforcement but eventually made their way out of the building, chasing the cars as they exited the Navajo nation.

Once news reports began circulating that John McCain was chased off Navajo land, the senator’s office released a [response to the Phoenix New Times](#):

“Senator McCain was honored to be invited by the Navajo Nation to meet with tribal and community leaders and to speak at the celebration of the Navajo Code Talkers on Friday. It was a great visit and he received a very warm reception from the Navajo community in Window Rock. He certainly wasn’t ‘chased off’ the reservation – this small group of young protesters had no practical impact on his productive meetings with top tribal leaders on a range of key issues, including the EPA’s recent Gold King Mine spill which threatens to contaminate the Navajo Nation’s water supply.”

Despite the senator’s office denying that the protesters had any “practical impact” on his meeting, it is clear that a new community of Native activists is on the rise.

This is only the latest in the reemergence of an active resistance to the colonization of Native peoples and First Nations.

Direct Link: <http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2015-08-17/caught-tape-native-americans-chase-john-mccain-navajo-land>

Tribal jury clears St. Marks of fraud charges

Amy Beth Hanson 5:07 p.m. MDT August 18, 2015



HELENA (AP) – A Chippewa Cree tribal court jury has cleared tribal chairman Ken St. Marks of allegations that he defrauded the tribe and ordered the tribe to pay him more than \$200,000 for his company's work on a pipeline project, his attorney said Tuesday.

But attorneys for both sides reached opposing conclusions over whether jurors believed St. Marks and his Arrow Enterprises conspired to defraud the tribe.

St. Marks was elected chairman of the tribal business committee in 2012. He has been thrown out of office and re-elected three times since. Council members have said that St. Marks defrauded the tribe with shoddy and incomplete work on a pipeline project and overcharged the tribe for leasing equipment.

St. Marks has argued that he was impeached for cooperating with a federal fraud investigation that led to the conviction of nearly two dozen tribal members and business associates for paying bribes and taking kickbacks to award contracts paid for with federal money. No federal charges have been filed against St. Marks.

During last week's trial, the tribe said St. Marks was unjustly enriched by receiving over \$428,000 from the tribe for pipeline work and equipment leases. The jury rejected those claims, and it said the tribe owed St. Marks \$214,000 in damages for payment the tribe withheld on another pipeline contract.

Attorney Richard Zack with the Pepper Hamilton law firm in Philadelphia said the judge has requested both sides to submit legal briefs on the issue of whether any monetary award is proper.

It was the jury's finding on the conspiracy claim that was not clear.

The first question on the jury form asks: "Do you find that there was a civil conspiracy to defraud the Tribe." The jurors answered yes, but they did not award the tribe any damages.

"The jury returned a partial verdict finding that Ken St. Marks conspired to defraud the Chippewa Cree Tribe," Zack said in a statement.

St. Marks' attorney, Jeff Rasmussen with the Fredericks Peebles & Morgan law firm, said he believes jurors were referring to the overall conspiracy involving the tribal members and others who have pleaded guilty or have been convicted of defrauding the tribe. He said he planned to ask the judge to throw that finding out, saying it was inconsistent with the rest of the verdict.

Zack also noted jurors did not award St. Marks all of the money he sought in his lawsuit.

The tribe's business committee "is now evaluating its obligations to its members in light of the finding of fraud" against St. Marks, Zack said.

In March, the inspector general's office within the U.S. Department of Interior ordered the tribe to pay St. Marks \$648,000 for back pay and attorney's fees for ousting him from office based on unsubstantiated allegations. The tribe is appealing that award.

Direct Link: <http://www.greatfallsbtribune.com/story/news/2015/08/18/tribal-jury-clears-st-marks-fraud-charges/31934431/>

Alongside a Doctor's Care, a Dose of Traditional Healing

By PASCALE BONNEFOYAUG. 19, 2015



Juanita Huenafil, a Mapuche therapist, heating a drum before prayers last month in the hut, or ruka, where she sees patients. Credit Tomas Munita for The New York Times

SANTIAGO, Chile — The first thing Manuel Lincovil does is take a look at the urine. A machi, or spiritual leader and healer of the indigenous Mapuche people, he watches the liquid settle as he shakes the glass jar, learning of his patient's experiences, ailments and sorrows.

"I look at the urine sample and then at the lines of their palms, and I tell them about their entire lives," Mr. Lincovil said as he sat under a tree, a poncho over his back, outside a traditional Mapuche hut called a ruka. Then, in an intense, confidential exchange, this machi digs deep into his patient's personal history before prescribing a dose of assorted herbal infusions.

Inside the ruka, several Mapuche women prepare herbal blends from about 150 varieties of plants, roots and tree bark. Each concoction is distinct, made for a patient's individual needs, according to Mr. Lincovil, 72, who twice a week sees dozens of patients at the ruka.

"This is not alternative or complementary medicine," he stressed. "It's another kind of medicine."



Manuel Lincovil, a spiritual leader and healer known as a machi, examined a patient's urine in front of an altar behind Los Castaños Family Health Center in Santiago. Credit Tomas Munita for The New York Times

This [ruka](#) is not on a picturesque mountaintop or in a forest clearing in southern [Chile](#). It is in the backyard of a busy public health clinic in La Florida, a working-class district of the capital, Santiago. While Mr. Lincovil is reading a patient's palm, doctors and nurses at Los Castaños Family Health Center bustle about, providing Western-style health care, oblivious to what happens beyond the back gate.

In the 1990s, the government of [Chile](#) began a significant venture to make its public health system more inclusive by introducing intercultural health care in areas of the country with indigenous populations. Services offered at rukas, like those provided in public clinics, are free for patients registered in the municipal public health system.

The indigenous health care providers in the south of the country mostly serve the Mapuche community. But in an unusual twist, here in Santiago, programs that were established to serve a Mapuche community now cater to a predominantly non-indigenous population, patients and Mapuche healers say.

The Mapuche medical center in La Florida, run by the Kallfulikan Indigenous Association, was set up as part of the government effort 15 years ago. Today, most of the patients who visit Mr. Lincovil at the ruka come from the non-Mapuche community, he said. They tend to be Chileans looking for an alternative to a Western public health care system known for its lack of resources and specialists.

One such patient was Guillermo Navarro, 66, a non-Mapuche Chilean who has embraced indigenous care. Three years ago, feeling ill, he visited Western health care providers in Santiago, underwent medical examinations and was repeatedly told he was fine. He knew he was not.

Mr. Navarro eventually visited Mr. Lincovil.

"The machi discovered a serious heart condition right away through my urine and my pulse," he said. "I started taking the herbs and noticed the effects immediately. That's when I realized that machis have a gift."

The Mapuche are Chile's largest indigenous group. Close to 5 percent of the nation's population of some 17 million people declared themselves of Mapuche origin in the 2002 national census, and 30 percent of them live in Santiago. The actual numbers are assumed to be much higher, but widespread racial discrimination in Chile has inhibited people from acknowledging their indigenous roots, local officials say. More recent figures are unavailable.

The government's push to provide indigenous health services in the capital started as an attempt to help an underserved community that had been reluctant to embrace Western health care.

A Canadian research project inspired one of the first indigenous health projects in Santiago. In 1999, the University of Ottawa developed a project around women's

decision-making power in La Pintana, a low-income district on the fringes of Santiago with the largest Mapuche population in the capital. The project was done in partnership with Catholic University in Chile and with the support of the municipal government. Initial surveys detected a common problem: Many Mapuche women in La Pintana often went without health care because they did not trust conventional Western medicine or feared discrimination in public health clinics, and traveling hundreds of miles to see a machi in their communities of origin was impractical.

The following year, the first intercultural health center opened in the Santiago Nueva Extremadura clinic in La Pintana, using Canadian funds and involving local indigenous organizations. A ruka was raised in the parking lot and Mr. Lincovil, the machi in La Florida, was brought in for his medicinal services.



Manuel Lincovil, right, leaving a ruka hut behind the clinic in Santiago.

“It was an exercise in mutual tolerance,” said Gabriel Jiménez, head of the municipal health department. Referring to the Mapuche and non-Mapuche populations, he said, “There was deep-rooted distrust between the indigenous population and the huinca, and the machi was regarded with suspicion by some doctors.”

There are now a handful of programs of this kind in the capital. And several hospitals and primary health centers in the Araucanía and Bío Bío regions in the south of the country, where half of the Mapuche population is concentrated, have incorporated indigenous ancestral knowledge and practices.

Many of these efforts are financed by the Health Ministry’s Special Program on Health and Indigenous Peoples, created in 2006 within the framework of Chile’s 1993 Indigenous Law, which addressed indigenous rights, protections and development.

Despite repeated requests over several weeks, the Health Ministry did not provide information on how and where the special program is being carried out. However, according to Mapuche organizations in Santiago, there are about a dozen sponsored programs throughout the capital, ranging from indigenous ceremonial centers that provide Mapuche health services, to intercultural agents who advise patients in public health clinics. Few have rukas and machis treating patients in the clinics.

Explanations for why a growing number of non-indigenous patients have turned to indigenous health providers vary. For Chileans like Javier Cáceres, 70, who had a tumor removed from one of his kidneys and began seeing a machi in late May, indigenous care offers an alternative to a system that was failing him.

“Conventional medicine no longer has anything to offer me,” he said as he waited his turn outside the ruka in La Florida to receive palliative care and treatment for depression.

“I was looking for an alternative, and natural medicine can never be a bad thing,” he said.

Mapuche medicine combines ancestral knowledge, rituals, nature and spirituality, and it aims to address the root of an ailment, not just the symptoms. Some patients and providers say the conversations with the machi are often therapeutic.

“People get sick because they are paying the cost of some wrongdoing; it is their spirit that is affecting their health,” explained Samuel Melinao, 45, a Mapuche chief, or lonko, of the Kallfulikan community running the health center in La Florida. “Some people leave here in tears, but no one will ever know why. You don’t see that in conventional medicine.”

On a sunny June morning in La Pintana, an older non-Mapuche woman arrived at a ruka built on a municipal plot of land that is now the Mapu Lawen Ceremonial Center. The woman greeted the health workers and handed one a package of maté, an herbal infusion widely consumed in southern Chile, as a gesture of gratitude. She immediately undressed down to her undergarments and lay facedown on a massage table.

“We always begin with a therapeutic massage,” said Juanita Huenafil, 61, of the Inchiñ Mapu Indigenous Association, which runs this ruka. “But before that, we pray at the altar outside.”

For the Mapuche, serving non-indigenous members of their local communities is an obligation, said Mr. Melinao, the Mapuche chief. “We are all people of the earth, and we can’t provide health services only to the indigenous. That would be discrimination.”

Direct Link: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/20/world/americas/chile-health-care-indigenous-practices-seep-in.html?_r=0

West Hartford High Schools Get New, Non-Native American Logos



The newest logos for Hall and Conard high schools in West Hartford.

By [Suzanne Carlson](#) [contact the reporter](#)

West Hartford High Schools replace Native American logos with new mascots.

WEST HARTFORD — The town's two high schools are set to start the new year with fresh logos, created after the board of education recommended that use of all Native American mascots and imagery be discontinued.

"We're very proud of the work that's been done by the students and the faculty and the community at both Hall and at Conard," said Assistant Superintendent Andy Morrow.

Conard's new logo is a "C" on a shield similar to a coat of arms, divided into quarters to represent academics, the arts, athletics and community.

Hall's new logo is in a similar style with an "H" and "W" for Hall Warriors.

Conard's Chieftain and Hall's Warrior mascots had previously been represented by Native American imagery, and controversy over the symbols has been simmering for years.

The issue came to a head in the fall when students at a soccer game between the two schools began yelling anti-semitic chants, prompting a letter from administrators to the school communities admonishing cultural insensitivity. Subsequently, some students came forward to say they thought the Native American logos were racist and should be eliminated, and the board held several meetings and a community forum on the issue.

Republican school board members Jay Sarzen and Mark Zydanowicz defended use of the mascots. But the four Democrats on the school board said the images, which included tomahawks and stylized Indian heads in war bonnets, were disrespectful and have no place in the schools.

Board members eventually agreed to a compromise and voted unanimously in March to recommend that the schools drop the mascots but keep the Chieftain and Warrior names.

"We never want to disrespect Native Americans. Our students are our mascots, and we remain the Conard Chieftains," Conard football coach Matt Cersosimo said.

Conard Principal Julio Duarte said a committee of parents, teachers, and students came up with the idea for a family crest style of logo and it was designed by Nina Fox, a parent and professional marketer.

Sports uniforms with the existing Native American imagery will either be replaced or have a patch with the new logo sewn over the old logos.

"The logo is just a symbol, but the reality is our students and our scores and all the good work that we do, it's really us. It's nothing to do with a logo or any of that, so that's not going to change," Duarte said.

Hall Principal Dan Zittoun could not be reached for comment.

Although Hall had already dropped its Indian head mascot in 2012, students maintained a student pep club called, "The Reservation." Conard's student pep club called itself "The Tribe."

Board Chairman Mark Overmyer-Velazquez said that the schools can't legally order the student-led clubs to stop using the names. Duarte said he's spoken with the leadership of Conard's pep club and they've tentatively decided to call the group, "The Red C," going forward.

The Conard student newspaper, the PowWow, also formerly had an Indian head logo in its masthead, but the March issue eliminated the image and changed the newspaper's name to "Wow!Pow!"

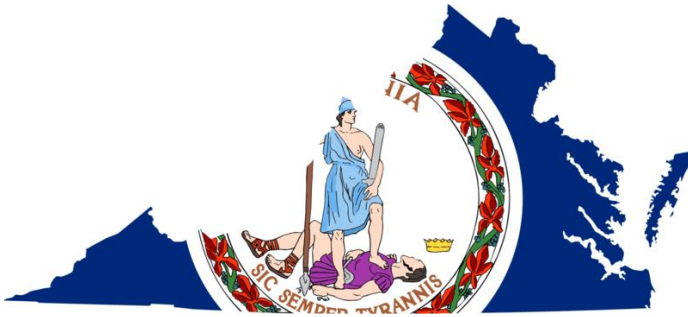
Direct Link: <http://www.courant.com/community/west-hartford/hc-west-hartford-new-high-school-logos-0820-20150819-story.html>

Lawmakers Hope for More Federal Recognition for Virginia's Native American Tribes

By Matt Laslo • 5 hours ago

Virginia lawmakers are redoubling their efforts to attain federal recognition for six Virginia Native American tribes. They're more optimistic now that the Bureau of Indian Affairs granted federal recognition to the Pamunkey Tribe.

More than four hundred years ago the European settlers were greeted by Virginia tribes, yet they didn't meet the federal government's standard for recognition. That's partly because in the early nineteen hundreds Walter Plecker destroyed their records. He only believed in two races: black and white, thus the tribes didn't fit into his worldview. Virginia Democratic Senator Mark Warner says his state has a shameful record when it comes to the tribes.



“For a long time, the Native American tribes in Virginia have really been discriminated against.”

In July the Bureau of Indian Affairs finally granted the Pamunkey tribe federal recognition, which now has the other Virginia tribes wondering if they should change their tactic.

“There was real concern that the federal recognition process would take forever and that’s why 6 of the tribes decided to go the legislative route. The remarkable thing is the Pamunkeys got through on the administrative proposal and the other six tribes have still been waiting for legislative approval.”

That legislative proposal needs to come from Congress and it’s hard to get floor time for the bill with lawmakers fighting over things like the Iran nuclear deal or funding for Planned Parenthood. Virginia Democratic Congressman Bobby Scott says the recognition of the Pamunkey highlights a sad truth.

“Well it... I think it shows the other tribes should have been recognized a long time ago. And so we’ll just keep pushing.”

But getting the six other tribes recognized won’t be as easy as one might think. Virginia Democratic Senator Tim Kaine says a part of the reason is that the other tribes don’t have their own reservation lands, which makes their struggle that much harder.

“Because they don’t have the reservation land the thing that made the Pamunkey easier for the purposes of meeting the VIA criteria is they got a reservation grant from the Crown of England and they can prove unbroken chain of titles since the 1670’s and the other guys don’t.”

Kaine says that makes the administrative route through the Bureau of Indian Affairs - or B-I-A - nearly impossible for the other tribes.

“So the word we get from the BIA is that it would be extremely difficult for the other tribes to get through the BIA.”

But Kaine is still optimistic. While riding the subway in the Capitol, the senator explained that the Virginia tribes have a better chance of getting Congress to recognize them.

“Ours are less controversial then some because our tribes have for sworn gambling. You know, they basically said we will not clam any sovereign right to gambling and any gambling we will agree to be bound by state law on gambling. Well some of the other tribes haven’t said that from other states so maybe there’s a way to move ours separately, maybe there’s a way to move a bunch of them together cause then you get more states interested.”

Virginia Democratic Congressman Gerry Connolly - and the rest of the state’s congressional delegation - say the six remaining tribes deserve swift congressional action.

“I think there’s a long and sorry history with how Native American tribal communities have been treated, especially in Virginia, and that sorry history has been linked to our racial past, and so we want to make sure justice ultimately is provided to long suffering communities of really our first citizens.”

The other problem facing the tribes is that this fall’s schedule is already jam packed and next year is a presidential election, so Congress isn’t expected to be too productive. That has Virginia lawmakers and tribal leaders calling for action without many options to force action on the issue.

Direct Link: <http://wvtf.org/post/lawmakers-hope-more-federal-recognition-virginias-native-american-tribes#stream/0>

Akron School Board approves establishment of Indigenous Peoples Day

By [Taylor Nigrelli](#) | News Sports Reporter

on August 19, 2015 - 10:14 PM, updated August 19, 2015 at 11:39 PM

Following in the footsteps of the Village of Akron and the Town of Newstead, the Akron Board of Education voted unanimously Wednesday to recognize the second Monday in October – also known as Columbus Day – as Indigenous Peoples Day.

The date will remain a districtwide holiday, with the focus shifted away from Columbus and toward Native Americans.

“Our classes will be doing some recognition of that day,” Akron Superintendent Kevin Shanley said. “We actually already do but there will be more of that.”

Although the idea for Indigenous Day was first proposed in 1977, Shanley said the push to recognize the holiday locally gained steam recently. The move comes five months after Akron lacrosse players refused to play a game against the then-Lancaster Redskins because of the team's nickname, and two months after Akron and Newstead opted to recognize the holiday.

The board also approved the following:

- A new tax warrant for the seven towns that make up the district. The Town of Newstead saw an increase of one cent per \$1,000, while the areas in Clarence, Alden, Royalton, Lockport, Alabama and Pembroke that fall in the district saw slight decreases.

The board briefly discussed why some town's rates were higher than others, but voted unanimously to approve the measure.

- Hirings for 26 district employees, including new coaches for girls junior varsity soccer, boys modified soccer and modified cross-country.

Direct Link: <http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/akron-school-board-approves-establishment-of-indigenous-peoples-day-20150819>